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KSF 148





CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR.

See the Verres.

LONDON : GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN, LTD.

Author of "The History of the English Language"

GUTHRIE AND ALLEN'S "THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE"

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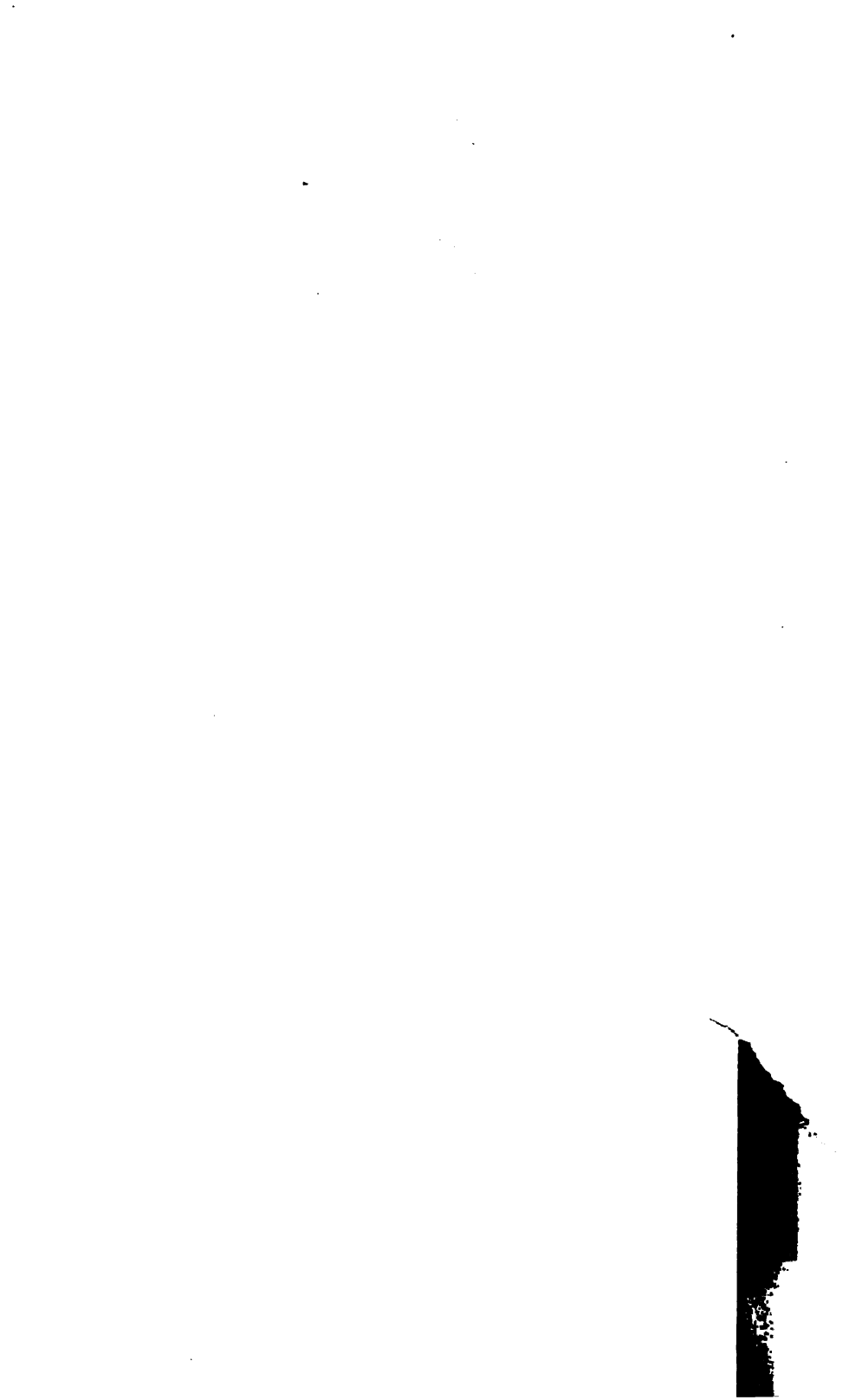
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JANUARY 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER I.

PRINCESS ILSE.

'AND as the hunter rode on through the wood, following the course of the stream, he saw rising out of the water the rock where the Princess Ilse is imprisoned. The Princess sat there on the rock, and sang. She asked him if he would set her free. He said he was willing, if he could. She told him to come back the next day to the spot, when she would show herself to him again—first as he saw her now, but afterwards in the shape of a serpent. If he could have courage to kiss her whilst in this form, no harm would befall him, and she would be released from the spell that bound her. He gave her his word, and went on. When he came the next day the Princess sat there again on the rock, and sang, and he was bewitched by her beauty; but when she rose before him transformed into a serpent, he was seized with terror and hurried away from the spot, nor ever dared return there to set her free.'

Here Cressida let the book slip from her fingers, and the sequel to the story her fancy wrote for itself.

That was always her way of reading books. So far from being carried out of herself by a novel, or poem, or play, however absorbing, she instinctively went about searching in such pages, as an astrologer might search in the stars, for some news of her own being, some reflection of her own thoughts, some reference to her feelings, more light on her past, but above all on her fate in the future.

As for the German fairy-tale she had just taken up to dip into, what was it, after all, but an allegory? Princess Ilse was herself, Cressida Landon, blushing unseen in a small country parsonage; fretting unheard against the sense of that hopeless semi-poverty which just permits of genteel vegetation unenlivened by the stir and distraction which the necessity for working and struggling gives; consumed with *ennui* and unavoidably denied its (alas) terribly expensive cures; but with a leaning in her towards high things and high places, which she was tempted to regard as prophetic.

Her eyes turned from the book to the little room, so small, so unexceptionably neat, and so dull of aspect, where she sat surrounded

by commonplace comforts,—the good things that fill, but do not gratify. O those monotonous chairs, with their work-a-day brown-holland pinafores on; the muslin curtains cunningly darned and re-darned by Mrs. More, her widowed father's treasure of a housekeeper; the piano that was waxing old, and on which Cressida hardly cared to play now; the carpet no longer new, but which was to hold out another twelve-month! She looked from one to another with an unqualified expression of reprobation and disgust, in which she could indulge without any remorse, as nobody was by to look on. To many, that interior would have seemed the model of what a tidy, tasteful, carefully-kept drawing-room in a country clergyman's house should be. That was the worst of it. Unlike the really poor, she had not even the right to repine. But Cressida was ambitious.

She burst into a laugh—merry, for she was acutely sensible to what was ludicrous in the situation, but with a ring of bitterness beneath.

'O, the unlucky girl that I am! Why, O why, did we ever leave Sorrento? I was so happy there. What possessed papa to take this wretched country living instead?'

The answer was obvious. After the death—when Cressida was about fourteen—of his wife, on account of whose delicate health this Sorrentine residence had been sought in the first instance, Mr. Landon was left with no special object for retaining the ill-paid chaplaincy he held in South Italy. And when, two years later, he made the exchange, he deemed it to be the best thing for them both. It had nearly doubled his income. Still this did not appease Cressida, to whom her early life, viewed by

the light of the present contrast, seemed as the incarnation of poetry by comparison.

There Nature at least was rich and generous. The sky, the sun, the air, the flowers, the scenery, made life, to those who could relish such things, almost voluptuous; and those luxuries cost nothing. Then every year one could rely on the coming of numbers of interesting visitors—birds of passage, true, but whose acquaintance was worth making—distinguished men and women of all nations. And Cressida had been a prime favourite with them as a child; petted, caressed, and everlastingly flattered and admired to her childish heart's content.

O, those were the days of clover!

But what sort of a medium is hers now, in a depressing climate, mediocre circumstances, an inert agricultural parish, and a stiff, unappreciative, clockwork society only one degree better than solitary confinement? It acted on Cressida like slow mental suffocation. Such unjust seclusion, she once thought, could not last long. Poetical justice must be done. The fairy-prince or knight-deliverer would appear in some modern human form divine, and all would be well. But six years have gone by; Cressida is twenty-two now, and she has a growing conviction that she may sit at home for ever, or till she is thirty, which seems to her much the same thing—not even death or some rich old widower will interfere and come and take compassion on her.

The clock striking five roused her. It was her appointed day and hour for practising the organ in her father's church, where she presided over the Sunday music. Cressida rose mechanically. One

look she cast at herself in the pier-glass, a look neither fond, nor vain, nor coquettish—she was not going on her way to dazzle anybody, not even to see anybody except a half-alive schoolgirl who worked the bellows—but a searching, critical, cold, and curious gaze. It was a sweet face that met her there, a face made to beguile, and all the more so, perhaps, because the full extent of its possible power of seduction did not seize you all at once, but took hold of your fancy slowly, insinuatingly, irresistibly at last. Cressida knew all its points, good and bad alike, very well, having made a careful and impartial study of her stock-in-trade.

“*Les yeux verts
Vont à l'enfer,*”

she sang to herself, laughing, as she left the room. ‘Poor mine, poor me! Too bad to be condemned—first to have green eyes in this world, and then to do penance for it in the next.’

Yet Cressida would not have exchanged those ‘green’ eyes of hers, with their peculiar power of shining from a distance, for the sweetest blue of Albion’s daughters, nor yet for the big brown ones of the beauties of Sorrento. Hers were unique. Everybody noticed them, and none could match their variable play.

Leaving the parsonage, she walked slowly up the lane to the church, which stood on the top of the hill about two hundred yards farther on.

She lingered for a few moments on the summit, with her hand on the churchyard gate. A fresh breeze was blowing up from the plain, and she stood looking down upon the broad expanse of English country spread beneath her.

It was a pleasant view, a nucleus of woods of mixed foliage

giving every shade of green, from the darkest fir to the silvery gray of the birch, but rich now in variegated autumn tints besides, meadows around lately sheathed with barley, pastures with comfortable-looking cattle feeding, and here and there a white farm or a cluster of red cottages, the whole picturesque of its kind. But Cressida’s thoughts are off on another tack than the idyllic.

The stretch of broad lands before her, the thickly-wooded park with the little lodge among the barberry-bushes, indicating the existence of a big house somewhere (in fact the chimneys are just visible through a break in the greenwood), have called up in her some highly matter-of-fact and vexatious reflections.

To be mistress of Monks’ Orchard is an ambition worthy even of Cressida at her own valuation. The house is, or might be made, superb; the property is large. By rights the young squire should have fallen in love with the parson’s lovely daughter; and so on, for Cressida, to matrimony, Monks’ Orchard, thousands, and happiness all round.

But the contrast of that which might have been with things as they are is grotesque. The young master of Monks’ Orchard is a *mauvais sujet* of the most hopeless description, weakly bad, with no strength to reform; who lives chiefly with boon companions he persists in choosing from the lower orders; who early applied himself to the task of bringing down his parents’ gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, and completed it, some years ago, by marrying, not Cressida, but a pastry-cook’s daughter. He is a spendthrift who would be in difficulties if he had a hundred thousand a year, leads a casual rambling life no one knows where, and never shows

his face at Monks' Orchard, which has been shut up ever since his father's death, and stands there to-day, sober and silent—a thousand times more dismal than the parsonage—like a caution to aspiring young ladies.

Now why *should* Tom Kennedy have been born the heir instead of his cousin Joe, the best, steadiest fellow in the world, and sworn friends with Cressida, whose acquaintance he has made at the county balls? But Joe is only a hard-working engineer, with his way still to make; and it can only be made, it seems, in half-civilised quarters of the globe, where at this very moment he is fagging away in a dangerous climate, among hostile aborigines, for a fortieth part of what is guaranteed to his cousin to squander year by year.

Farther off lies the nearest town, Lullington; and just on its outskirts a curl of smoke, rising from a clump of trees near the road, marks the site of Greywell Court, where live the Alleynes, the nearest neighbours with whom Cressida is at all intimate.

The second son, Norbert, is just her age. Six years ago their friendship began, when school-girl and schoolboy. Brother and sister they meant to be, but somehow it would not do. Long ago the feeling ripened into something more on the youth's side. To the part she now plays in his life and thoughts, Cressida likes best to shut her eyes. She is accustomed, however, to think of him in a general way as her most faithful servant. He would go through fire and water for her. He might do something more—more to the purpose at least.

Here, again, there are wheels within wheels, and cross forces holding each other in check. Norbert's uncle is a rich London banker. Mr. Marriott has no

sons, and would willingly be the making of his nephew in his own little kingdom, give him an opening, push him on, perhaps take him young into partnership; and so on for Norbert to tens of thousands, for the Marriotts could buy up the Kennedys again and again.

But, unluckily, this young Alleyne has strong artistic leanings; and though, two years ago, to the surprise of everybody but Cressida, he yielded to the instance of his father, accepted the clerk's post Mr. Marriott offered him, and agreed to give the bank a trial, he hates it, as only single-hearted natures can hate, and may any day be expected to rebel and take *la clé des champs*.

All these mistaken social arrangements are old grievances; but Cressida gives yet a fresh sigh over each, and the stupidity of things in general, as she turns away and goes towards the little church, a clean, tidy, unexceptionably appointed, even passably ornamental little church, but, like the parsonage, cramped, bare, and unsuggestive. O for a cathedral with its long dim aisles, like petrified avenues, vaulted canopies above, and mysterious broken lights and shadows, thought Cressida, as she seated herself at the organ to practise, or rather to run through half a dozen easy voluntaries, choosing the pieces she knows best and loves best. For the drudgery of real work, such as might improve her musical knowledge or execution, she feels no call, no stimulus whatever. Who will hear her play? The apathetic schoolchildren at the weekly practice, the drowsy congregation at the Sunday performance. The regulation hymns and chants she already knows by heart. Has she not had to drum them into her choir of clods, month after month, at

the expense of infinite trouble and patience on both sides?

Her more ambitious attempts at training a superior choir, and evolving cherubs out of the clods, she long ago abandoned in despair. Why, no sooner has a Fernswold child unlearned Nature's teaching, which enjoins singing through its nose, acquired confidence and the rudiments of the sol-fa system, than the time has come for it to leave, and it vanishes into domestic service or farm-labour in some distant parish. For her own part in the performance, Cressida plays correctly she knows; but she knows also that if she did not, nobody but herself would find it out. So what should urge her to tackle difficulties and exert herself when she feels tired and indolent, as to-night? It is much pleasanter to return to her favourite preludes, which she can play without trouble, without thinking even, for her fingers of themselves find the right way over the keys; thus her thoughts are left free to play tunes of their own—dream-tunes, bound by no rules of harmony or rhythm, chanting of wild and delightful improbabilities and suggestive adventures.

For instance, how heavenly it would be if the young hero of her history—he was no myth, having already a substantial shape and an equally distinct personality—were to surprise her suddenly in one of her country walks, or at her music here in the church! True, experience had taught her that she might roam through the Mouks' Orchard woods all day long, make the church-echoes ring every evening with sonorous marches and dirges, without the faintest chance of interruption or an approach to an adventure.

But to-day, when just half way through a deliciously dismal 'Dies iræ,' she distinctly heard the clang

of the churchyard gate, a foot-tread on the gravel path, then the creak of the hinge of the heavy west door, and steps advancing up the aisle. Not for all this would Cressida pause in her music or break off her dream. Might not this be its accomplishment? It was only when the intruder had walked up and stood behind her, looking over her shoulder, that she stopped at last and glanced round.

'Why, Norbert, is it you, after all?' she said, with a little look and laugh of disappointment; 'Only you!' her accent added for her. 'I heard you were at Greywell. But what has brought you all the way up the hill this evening?'

He glanced from her to the organ significantly. But Norbert could not heave his heart into his mouth for the benefit of those who could not, or would not, read it in his face when he gave them the chance.

'I took a holiday and a walk,' he replied, with an assumed nonchalance that was characteristic and amusing. 'Hearing the organ going, from the fields over there, I thought I would just come to see who was practising. But please go on. Don't let me interrupt. Or think it's Sunday, and I'm the congregation,' he concluded, with a laugh.

Cressida looked dubious. Her hands rested lightly on the dumb keys, her head was turned a little aside, her eyes uplifted, not at Norbert, but fixed on a stone corbel beneath one of the rafters of the roof, with a strange, wistful, far-off expression. A gleam of golden light, shooting through the stained glass in a lancet window, fell across her features, suffusing, transfiguring them in its rays.

'You look like a spirit—nothing human—some new musical divinity, there at the organ,' said

Norbert suddenly. 'I wish I were a painter now, like my friend Lewis Lefroy. Do you know, I envy and could hate those thieves of artist-fellows, who can take down a thing that they see once, and make it their own off-hand.'

Cressida smiled delightfully. She dearly loved to be told that she looked like a divinity. It was nearly as good as playing like one.

'Play,' he said.

She shook her head.

'Not now that you are here, Norbert. Change places, and let me be the congregation, please. How do you suppose I could go on with my wretchedly feeble performance with *you* there to listen and criticise?'

Here was Norbert's cue to pay her a compliment on her playing. But the young fellow was of a truthful disposition, and in this single matter of music it was not even in the power of Cressida's divinity to blind him. He only laughed rather awkwardly, and then, on her repeating her request, he took, nothing loth, the place she vacated at the organ. To anything in the shape of a musical instrument, Norbert gravitated like a cygnet to the water. The church was speedily ringing with something very different from Cressida's feminine meandering. Through all difficulties and intricacies, Norbert's long firm hands seemed to find their way with the unerring certainty of instinct. Gradually a curious metamorphosis came over his face. Its languor and abstraction vanished; the expression became bright, attentive, comprehensive. Hands, feet, head, his whole activity was concentrated and absorbed in what he was about. Even for Cressida there was no more room in his mind.

As for her, already her mind's eye was far away. At first she had listened with dutiful admi-

ration, though with a vague, restless, unowned feeling of irritation at having it forced upon her notice that Norbert—that anybody—could be so unutterably ahead of herself in power and talent. But soon yielding to the lulling influence of music, deepening twilight shadows, and solitude,—for Norbert's presence, whilst occupied as at present, scarcely counted for more than that of a man in a trance,—she was off again on her old tack of castle-building, a kind of mental dram-drinking which, from lack of higher enjoyment, she would indulge in with dangerous freedom.

Once indefinite and largely tinged with poetry, these creations of hope were now more and more apt to present themselves as visions of good things of a positive and more obviously attainable nature. She had grown tired of pursuing the Fata Morgana of romance, and somewhat sceptical about it in her heart. Delight, in poetry, might mean love, moonlight, nightingales, devotion, the outpouring and alliance of souls, and so forth; but in modern English society, where her lot lay, the nearest approach to it—so far as her observation went—would be a house of one's own like Monks' Orchard, surroundings that in artistic taste and beauty should excel everybody else's; exquisite hothouse flowers, and plenty of them; dress as a fine art carried to the supremest point of perfection; Venetian glass and old china to gaze upon; parquetted floors and Oriental rugs—even horses and carriages have a great deal to do with an ideal existence. The question was, if the raptures of poets and romance-writers had any corresponding realities on earth to satisfy the longings they excite. Or was not the existence

of the *grande dame*, in fact, the best that life had to offer a woman—the small change with which it repays the magnificent, but doubtful, notes of a heart's ambition?

Suddenly she was roused by Norbert's voice. He was asking what she thought of the organ sonata of his own that he had just played.

Cressida had not heard one note. She was obliged to confess she had been in the clouds for the last quarter of an hour.

Norbert looked disappointed. His brow contracted with a slight, pained frown.

Cressida was filled with instant, immense contrition. Her heart was very soft, one half of it at least, like a peach on the sunny side. She often cordially despised herself for her thoughts, and at such moments felt of a really angelic disposition, longing only to make amends.

'Play it once more,' she said entreatingly.

He complied. She listened now, and for the thousandth time wondered, lost in admiration for the genius of the boy (Norbert was her own age, but it was convenient and easy to think of him as a boy still); lamented that he could not follow his bent, that he had received no regular musical education, and that now filial duty, interest, prudence, gratitude, everything indeed but inclination, said to him, 'Stick to the bank.'

'Perfect,' she murmured, with a long-drawn breath, when he had ended, and looking at him hesitatingly. Lately music had been a sealed subject between them. This at his own express desire. It had cost him such a terrible wrench to give up certain dear schemes of his in that direction, even provisionally, and give them up for the counter, that his only chance of peace of mind lay in

rigorous avoidance of looking back or away from the beaten track, and the slightest allusion to his forsaken love pained and troubled him. Cressida began to be a little astonished at the ready, quiet pleasure with which he had rushed at the forbidden fruit this afternoon.

'I must be going,' she said, rising; 'but won't you come home with me, Norbert? Papa will be so glad to see you.'

Cressida found herself sometimes clinging to Norbert's society; intercourse with his purer and simpler nature was a kind of temporary escape from herself and wicked dreams. It was soothing too to feel his enjoyment in being with her, and to know she was giving some pleasure, if not doing some good.

He caught at the invitation, of course. They left the little church together, and somehow, by tacit consent, instead of turning down the lane which would have brought them to the parsonage immediately, took the other direction, making a ten minutes' circuit across the fields.

'I go back to London on Monday,' said Norbert presently.

'Must you?' said Cressida. 'So soon as that? How nice if you could have stayed!'

'No, I must go,' he said shortly. 'I only came up for—— Cressida, I've something to tell you.'

'Have you, Norbert?' she asked, looking up; curiosity suddenly and sharply roused by a novel, independent ring in his tone.

'I've made a new acquaintance lately in town.'

'Well?' said Cressida, more and more inquisitive.

'Did you ever hear of Matthison—Sir Francis Matthison?'

The mystification began to clear from her face.

'Is he not professor of music at one of the Universities?'

'At Glasborough; yes. I chanced to meet him the other night at an evening party, where they made me play—and once or twice since—and he—and he—'

'Was in raptures, of course,' said Cressida, with animation.

'I don't know,' Norbert returned imperturbably. 'He never said so, and I certainly never asked him.'

'What did he say, then?'

'Something much more to the point than that.'

'Well?'

'He wants me to give up the bank and go with him next Christmas to Germany.'

'To Germany?'

'Yes, Leipzig. He wants me to enter the Conservatoire there, and promises me introductions to the professors whom he knows. He says—he says—'

Norbert, who was modesty itself, could not bring himself to repeat what Sir Francis had said. Cressida must infer it.

So, breaking off, he began detailing the plan—this possibility of entering upon a new future after his own heart, suddenly put within his reach; and as he talked of it his face brightened and took spirit and force, just as when he sat communing with the organ. Led on and on by his own eagerness, Norbert the Silent found fluent words enough and to spare, and he dwelt at length on the picture of a musical student's life abroad, and the wide and congenial perspective thus opened to him.

That was *his* Eldorado of old. Five years now since he and Cressida first talked it over, when in his holidays they lolled on the long grass among the field-daisies on summer afternoons, staring up into the blue sky. Norbert had never really abandoned it, and

though he had most resolutely put it out of his head lately, Cressida felt sure that out of his heart it had never gone.

Somehow, as, encouraged by her attention, he went on pouring out his confidences, becoming more and more eager and animated, a bitter feeling that was very unlike sisterly interest rose within her. She wanted to speak, but something seemed to spring up in her throat and choke her. She was glad that they reached the parsonage before Norbert had half completed his picture. The string of his tongue had been loosed, emphatically. Cressida had a possible, redoubtable rival in that boy's heart.

Mr. Landon, the tall, limp, amiable, gentlemanly, short-sighted parson of Fernswold, was patiently waiting dinner for his daughter. He was pleased to see Norbert, whom he was fond of, and accustomed to treat as one of the family.

During the meal Norbert relapsed into silence. The burden of weaving the web of conversation fell upon Cressida, who performed her task like a heroine—the heroine who had to spin ropes out of sand. She made tragedy and pathos out of the old pony that had fallen lame, wit and humour out of the schoolchildren's latest blunders and the proverbial philosophy of the rheumatic old woman at the lodge. She did not wish her father to notice that there was anything more than ordinary preoccupying their visitor and herself.

At nine Norbert said he must go. Mr. Landon did not press him to remain, having the spectre of the next morning's sermon (as yet unbegun) haunting his soul. He absently wished the boy good-night, withdrew to his study, and

set to fumbling among his concordances and commentaries.

'Won't you go out by the garden, Norbert?' said Cressida. 'It will be shorter for you.'

She threw open the glass door and led the way down the steps. The sky was overcast, and the little lawn lay before them full of dark shadows from the over-hanging elms, sombre and still, like a cemetery.

'Cressida,' he said, in a low voice, with a tone of grave appeal, 'have you nothing to say to all I have been telling you?'

'Only that I—I congratulate you, Norbert, and that I am glad—so glad—it has come at last.'

'Why?' said he perversely.

'Isn't it the very thing you have always longed for and dreamt of?' she said vehemently. They were walking side by side down the narrow path between ever-green shrubberies skirting the lawn. 'Fulfilled at last, Norbert; how happy you must be!'

She spoke with a curious admixture of feelings. Uppermost was a childish, helpless, bitter pang of envy. Norbert would go to Germany, live for what he liked, get celebrated, realise his heart's desire and ambition. Everybody did but herself. She would be left unsatisfied, as usual; but more lonely than ever before. Other butterfly adorers came and went. Joe was at San Francisco; others, nearer in longitude, were practically as far removed. But Norbert, her dear companion, had never deserted yet.

'Yes, it is a chance—such a distinct piece of good fortune as doesn't come twice to a fellow at the right moment,' said Norbert thoughtfully. 'If I don't make the plunge now, I never shall. So much we may take for certain; but—' And he hesitated.

There was a 'but,' it appeared.

They were now out of sight of the lights in the parsonage; the winding walk was shut in by limes and thorn-trees that met overhead, and it seemed to Norbert as if he could speak more freely here in the dark, with not a disturbing sign of life about them but the weird gray hawk-moths flitting around, and the dull creaking, monotonous cry of the fern-owls over the distant fields.

'If I go to Germany,' he continued, with forced coolness, 'there are one or two vexatious things sure to happen. First, I shall make my father very mad with me.'

'Of course, at first, yes,' said Cressida gently. 'We are prepared for that; but that will not last for ever. When you are successful, famous, as I know you will be, he will forgive you, forget he ever was angry.'

'When?' muttered Norbert doubtfully; 'but that is a long, long day off. Next, that uncle of mine—'

Cressida was silent.

'He will wash his hands of me, you know, for ever. Whether I sink or swim, I shall get no more help from there—nor countenance either.'

Cressida tried to laugh.

'No, Norbert; it is you who wash your hands of him and the bank.'

'Well, in doing that I just turn my back on *all* prospects of ever making my fortune, in most people's sense of the word. Not on one, but on all. Even supposing the best,—that I get on as I wish to,—I shall never, probably, be what they call well off.'

Poor Norbert, he felt he was pronouncing a fatal sentence on himself. But Cressida did not speak.

'I throw myself *entirely* on my own resources—my single resource, I mean. Professor Matthison de-

clares I shall do—that I shall make my own way. I believe that I could, with the opportunities he offers me.'

'Well?' she whispered, almost inaudibly.

'Well, on the other hand, my uncle, who is pleased to be satisfied by the way in which he says I've applied myself to business lately, intends after Christmas to promote me temporarily to a post of confidence; he will send me as deputy-manager for six months to a country branch of his firm. If I acquit myself to his satisfaction, he promises it shall be the stepping-stone to other things. In short, if I give myself to him, he is willing to do all he can for me, and that is equal to a good deal.'

Settlement in life was a mild word for what Cressida knew that it meant. Partnership in the bank might follow in time, and when it came make a rich man of Norbert, even as riches go in these days.

'For that, Cressida, I must stop my ears to all my other schemes, all musical notions, at once and for good. The work I have to do wants, to say the least, the best part of every day's time and attention; and that I can't give if I let myself look back or make plans—as you know.'

Yes, Cressida knew. Let Norbert once get dreaming over an organ, or piano, or worse, a quire of music-paper, and time and place were nowhere, and his uncle would hear of strange derelictions on the part of his favoured clerk and *protégé*. Such lapses had occurred; she and he had laughed over them; but they might occur once too often. Total abstinence from musical reverie was his only chance, if he was ever to become his uncle's right hand. He paused, and concluded by asking, with odd *brusquerie*,

'What do you advise?'

It was gratifying to find Norbert coming to her to make her the arbiter to decide the balance of his life, pleasant to know herself the sibyl of whom a man had come to inquire whether he should follow the certainty of stepping into material wealth, or the uncertainty of rising to future eminence in a natural calling. The sibyl could give but one answer out of her native wisdom.

'Norbert,' she began unhesitatingly, but with an effort, 'I do feel it dreadfully hard to advise you—to speak what I think. Because, say you gave up all your prospects here to devote yourself to music, and then supposing your health failed, or you met with bad fortune or delays and disappointments—for the cleverest artists fail sometimes from no fault of their own—well, in that case I should feel to blame afterwards for having urged you to a step that in itself is a risk—rash, perhaps. Still, Norbert, you have so often told me—and I know it is true—that you don't desire great wealth for yourself—that you would rather be a Rubinstein than a Rothschild—and since that could never make you happy'—her voice quivered a little as she went on—'and the other might, and Sir Francis Matthison has offered to put you in the way of getting on—which, as you say, is a rare piece of good fortune—so, Norbert, as music is what you chiefly care about, and there is nothing, *nothing* to keep you back, I think you should make up your mind to take the plunge—to do as you like, and accept Sir Francis's offer.'

Strange, she strove hard to command her voice, but it faltered for tears. It was Norbert now who was mute.

'You will go to Germany,' she

said disconsolately, 'and stay abroad for years, I daresay, living among new people and places. Ah, Norbert, it will be good-bye!'

There was a sad, tender inflection in her voice now that touched an electrical spring in her listener. A strange hope leapt in upon him—a hope that hitherto he has known so well for a wolf in sheep's clothing that he has resolutely denied it admittance.

'Say I did go to Germany,' he began suddenly, 'say I never came back, or not for many years, should you care, Cressida?'

She had quickened her pace nervously, and walked on, her head bent down, and passing her hand over her forehead.

'Because,' he resumed, with rising energy, 'if once I thought, knew that my going or staying made that difference to you—' He broke off, and exclaimed, with a sudden mad stretching out of his hands, as it were, to his *ne plus ultra* of existence, 'O Cressida, if only you could go with me!'

'Hush, hush!' she said quickly; 'don't talk so wildly, Norbert. Let us be reasonable. If you are to start life for yourself as an art-student, and in defiance of your people, you will need to be independent and unfettered, if ever man did.'

Well Norbert knew his last words were mere raving. A musical student, to come to the brutal truth, would have enough to do to support himself, for some years to come. The notion of embarking in such a career at two-and-twenty with a wife, and that wife Cressida, was ridiculous—suicidal.

'Nay, but I think,' she persisted conscientiously, 'that as this predilection of yours is so strong—*quite* the strongest feeling you have—I would obey it, Nor-

bert—flying over everything, and go.'

He looked at her, speakingly. Must he tell her in so many words that it was only the strongest but one?

'Would you miss me, Cressida?' he asked presently.

'Miss you!' she repeated. 'Of course I should. Ah, Norbert, I often think, when I am very miserable, which I generally am, that there is no one in all the world who cares, or who ever will care, for me but you; if, indeed, you *do* care for me,' she added, changing her tone and running off into a laugh.

They had reached the gate leading into the fields. Cressida leaned against the stile, looking into the dark space of desolate meadow-land before her. Never before to-day had she thought of how unbearable the loneliness would be to her without Norbert's visits to look forward to.

'You know you've only to say, "Stay,"' he began precipitately; 'and for you I'll forget everything else I love; learn to love what I hate, and serve such an apprenticeship to my uncle as shall confound him and everybody. I think there is nothing I could not do if—'

'Hush, hush!' said Cressida, painfully agitated by the sudden uncontrollable fervour of his manner. 'We must talk of this some other time. Dear Norbert, I want you to do what is really best and wisest for yourself in all this.'

Somehow their hands were locked as she spoke.

How her eyes shone through the dark! Norbert's—mild, blue, passive, deerlike—were fixed upon them intently, and he saw that Cressida's were full of tears. Suddenly, as if ashamed of her weakness, or on some reacting impulse, she freed her hand with a sharp,

petulant movement, gave a whispered good-night with a half smile, half pout of childlike impotence, then slid away, and disappeared among the trees.

The Northern lights were shooting behind the Monks' Orchard woods, and the aurora glowed in the sky overhead as Norbert went on his way homewards. He saw, but forgot to wonder and admire. It seemed natural that meteors should choose to flash, clouds to light up their bonfires, to-night.

His was a poet's nature, alive to the extremes of joy and pain, to emotion stronger than reason, than life itself. He did not trouble himself much with thought during his walk. That dawning exultation was quite enough for one evening. Cressida—her look, tremor, hesitation; she knew his feeling—responded! O chimera!

CHAPTER II.

A FAMILY PICTURE.

NORBERT as he neared home slackened his pace, looking like a truant schoolboy loitering before the walls of the educational establishment, where he is naturally loth to put in his reappearance. Yet to the uninitiated passer-by Greywell was a pleasing, even an inviting-looking, place. Such a house as meets us on the outskirts of most English country towns; a shapely pile of mellow red brick, perhaps a century old, with steep sloping roofs, and the walls profusely overgrown with creepers; roses for summer wear, that had faded now, hops for autumn, ivy for all times and seasons. At the back lay the small, symmetrical lawn-garden, not long ago a prism of red geraniums, yellow calceolarias, and blue lobelias, traces of which lingered still. The grounds,

limited in extent, were skilfully planted with groups of oak, ash, and larch trees, that disguised the boundaries; and in front of the house lay a large square sheet of water, fringed with trailing willows and birches interspersed here and there by a copper beech-tree, and with two swans sailing automatically up and down the surface.

A thoroughly hearty, hospitable-looking English home, which nevertheless for certain reasons had acquired from the satirical among the townspeople of Lullington the nickname of 'The Lock-up,' as it were to draw the line between it and the county jail, which stood on the opposite side of the road. A distinction without a difference.

The last sign of expansion had disappeared from Norbert's face when he pushed aside the heavy wooden garden-gates, and as he walked up the drive his features had assumed an expression of constrained fortitude, markedly out of keeping with their youth. One of the drawing-room blinds was not drawn; there were lights inside, and Norbert slid along cautiously by the house-wall till he reached this window, to take a furtive peep and ascertain what was going on.

'I might have known,' was his mental comment.

Nothing, as usual. His father, Colonel Alleyne, offensively flourishing his newspaper, his mother defensively crouched behind the tea-urn, and his two elder sisters, Millie and Jeanie, clinging to their fancy-work. No sound but the crackling of the *Times* and the fizzing of the tea-urn. A meeting of Friends could not more fully have represented the Ideal of Silence, as Charles Lamb politely puts it. To Norbert, who knew that already he had incurred the displeasure of the head of the

family by coolly absenting himself without leave or warning, the picture looked so unpromising that he felt even more anxious than before to put off the evil moment. So he went round to the garden-door, which happened to be unlocked, admitted himself silently, and hurried down a little corridor leading to a big room at the opposite end of the house, where he shut himself in, like a man taking sanctuary, with an air of intense relief.

It was the schoolroom, or had been for twelve years, and was useful still as an oasis in a desert to the young people, thanks to such an extraordinary accumulation there of litter as made it look more like a representation of chaos, and did not invite visits from the elders.

A mass of books with covers missing, torn leaves gone astray, thumbed dictionaries and grammars plentifully and irreverently illustrated, tables well inked, dusty superannuated games, piles of old-fashioned music—the scene was Mrs. Alleyne's despair; and the Colonel, a stern partisan of order, finding all attempts at reform utterly fruitless here, consented to regard it as a lumber-room, into which he never deigned to set foot. On this account, for his children it had become a haven of refuge, associated with their happiest, at all events their most contented, hours.

The room was dark but for the flickering firelight, and Norbert, thinking nobody was there, threw himself into a chair by the hearth with a sort of nervous violence and impetuosity. The experiment was dangerous. Norbert was no great weight, but the chair cracked alarmingly, and a low laugh from the other end of the room warned him that he was not alone.

A girl, a child in looks, was

seated with her elbows on the table, in a shadowy recess. Turning away from the pile of books over which she was industriously spoiling her eyes, she looked across at him mirthfully.

'Beware, Norbert,' she said. 'I broke the back of that chair jumping over it last summer. You mustn't lean back hard, you know.'

Most of the chairs present had suffered similarly during a short rage for vaulting over their backs which had prevailed in the school-room.

'What, Fan! you here?' said Norbert languidly.

Fan was the youngest sister, and six years his junior.

'Yes, very much,' she replied emphatically, leaving her place and coming to burrow on the rug in front of him. 'Norbert, such a row as there has been!'

'What about, this time?' asked her brother stoically.

'Began about you. The Tsar stormed at your not turning up to dinner and keeping us there waiting.'

This was papa, commonly called the Tsar by Fan, who was wanting in reverence of her elders, as such.

'How long did you wait for me?' asked Norbert.

'Five minutes by the clock. Considering that he only kept us an hour and a half himself yesterday—' she pursued, speaking fast and indignantly, but Norbert interposed stonily.

'Well, well, just let me hear what happened.'

'Mamma said something—took your part. It was stupid of her, you know; I shouldn't, for it made him angrier still, and the wrangle went on all dinner-time. I tell you positively, Norbert, it embittered the soup, and turned the cream in the tart! If ever I, or Millie, or Jeanie dared to make a remark, we were set down with

sarcasm; and silence was the worst impertinence of all. So, Norbert, I thought I had had quite enough of it—everybody's eyes were red, too—and after dinner I ran away and came here. They sent the servant for me, but I heard him coming, and hid in the wood-basket under the logs. If papa scolds me, I shall just tell him why,' she stated valiantly. 'Jeanie and Millie are too stupid. The moment he raises his voice they cry directly, though they must know that puts him in a rage; and you can do nothing with papa when he's in a rage. Now when he storms at me, at all events, I give him some reason for it.'

Norbert sighed rather mournfully. Fan talked grandly, but in his opinion she did not know what she was talking about. She was the youngest, and as yet but half repressed; the strongest, perhaps, but she had had fewer years of the ordeal of that domestic despotism which he and Jeanie and Millie had found so crushing to their fainter spirits and wearing to their feebler vitality.

Fan was used to turn for a refuge to her books. There was an extensive library that had belonged to her grandfather in the school-room, and Heaven knows what the girl had read, or not read rather, having the run of this miscellaneous collection, and making a diligent study of its volumes, volumes that Millie and Jeanie had been too little curious, too timid, too listless ever to touch.

'What's the matter, Norbert?' she said sharply. 'Why, your hand shakes as if you'd been stung by the gymnotus or electric eel!'

'Nothing, nothing,' said Norbert, trying to laugh, but unable to master the tremor still upon him—a sort of afterglow of excitement. 'How are you getting on

with—what's it, Latin?—political economy?'

'Finely,' she replied; 'I've settled the Georgics, and mean to tackle Horace next. I was deep in Mill when you came in. There, what do you think of that?'

'Capital,' he responded absently. 'I say, Fan, shall you and I walk over to Fernswold Church to-morrow afternoon?'

'I'm game,' she returned; 'but recollect that old Landon is to preach in Lullington, special sermon for the infant schools in Timbuctoo.' Norbert *had* forgotten the fact. 'How's Cressida?' Fan continued.

'O, very well—I don't know,' said Norbert, at random; then, sensible that his sister was watching him with a puzzled expression, he concluded hastily, 'Come, I'm going to the drawing-room;' and Fan, on reflection, attributed her brother's odd manner to that nervous mental ferment which even the thought of his father could induce.

But when the two young folks joined the solemn family circle, and Fan, folding her hands, whispered to herself, 'Now for a rumpus; O dear, O dear!' to her surprise Norbert's demeanour was firmer than she had ever seen it. He had his reward. Whether the force of Colonel Alleyne's ill-temper had been completely spent by its recent explosions, and required time to accumulate again, or whether the brunt of his displeasure had somehow been shifted from the real culprit to the unoffending womankind who had made his excuses, the expected 'rumpus' did not come off. But Norbert's unwonted composure and absence of timidity had helped to keep the peace. It was the mixture of servile fear and lame opposition in wife or child's manner that acted on Colonel Alleyne's

temper like a kettle tied to a dog's tail. Norbert's reply, when asked pretty roughly where he had been, 'To the parsonage. The Landons asked me to dine, so I stayed,' was given in a tone that took the Colonel aback, and he held his peace for once.

Norbert was astonished at his own assurance. It seemed there were feelings in him that could mate his dread of his father. But this evening his self-confidence was supported by a remote consciousness that not only his will, but his inclination too, were just now taking emphatically the direction Colonel Alleyne would have them to take.

But Fan, who merely noted the event, told Jeanie with a grave face that night that it was all nonsense about the age of miracles being past, and went to bed, returning thanks that the hundred and thirty-fifth row of the year—she had begun to enter them in an account-book—had been supernaturally averted.

Colonel Alleyne was a disappointed man. Charitable judges found here the key to his unamiable character; and it could not be denied that his career in some ways had been singularly unfortunate. He had been passed over (unfairly treated, he considered, and practically ruined by the machinations of private enemies) in the army, and retired from the service in some dudgeon. He had married a lady reputed to be an heiress, but whose fortune, when she became entitled to it, was found to have been speculated away in bubble companies. He was excessively fond of her, and she died early, leaving him with three small children on his hands. Gossip maintained that he had simply bullied the nervous, fragile woman to death, an apprehension which nevertheless did not pre-

vent another gentle lady from very shortly afterwards accepting the widower's hand. She was the daughter of a *nouveau riche*, whom the Colonel could not abide nor treat civilly. Soon after his marriage he was not on speaking terms with his father-in-law, and one result was the curtailing of the daughter's portion in her father's will, a crown to the Colonel's grievances.

That one and all were mainly due as a first cause to his moral infirmity, a violence of temper in which he habitually indulged, and which thus had come to form itself into the principle of his paternal government, was as inconceivable to him as it was manifest to others. His unpopularity in the army, tiffs with the authorities, the loss of his first wife, and of his second wife's fortune, might all be traced more or less directly to such a fatal habit of intemperance in his humours as had made him, his life through, his own inveterate enemy, and was equally ruinous to his personal happiness and to that of all those in any way connected with him. But in whatever went wrong, Colonel Alleyne saw only his bad luck, other people's stupidity, ingratitude, or ill-will.

The effect of such moral discipline as he exercised was well displayed in his family. As for his wife, five-and-twenty years of it had reduced her to the capacity of a mere shadow, the habit of absolute, blind submission having become such a second nature to her that she was almost as incapable of entertaining an opinion, a plan, or a wish, except by his suggestion, as is a mirror of producing images by itself. Again, his daughters, Millie and Jeanie, were tablets upon which nothing was to be written except by his own hand. Timid, awkward girls

to begin with, the system of petty terrorism under which they had grown up had soon quenched the dim spark of liveliness and energy within them. Their father was disappointed in them, ignoring that he had himself to thank for it. They painfully felt themselves of no account, and that he despised them for their shortcomings. As if in self-defence, the sisters clubbed together; Millie and Jeanie were inseparables. Union makes burdens more tolerable to bear; and though two such weak hearts joined are as far as ever from making a strong one, they thus escape the sting and shame of lonely weakness. Alike in height, complexion, back-hair, and apparel, with never a distinguishing touch in their gowns, jackets, and hats, what wonder if they were regarded, in society, as duplicates, and many of their acquaintance failed to remember them apart? Yet there was a radical difference between their natures. Millie's soul, never over-ethereal, had, so to speak, been well materialised, and was subject to no troubles but such as are definite and tangible, as present, actual discomfort, hard words, sarcasm, or unkindness. In the absence of these she was content, the restless will and active affections having been as effectually annihilated in her as the most modern philosopher could desire. Jeanie was of a more sensitive and affectionate disposition. Content, for her, lay in devotion to one whom she could love, and this was her single strong characteristic, one that may bend itself well to happiness, but that till now she had only felt as an unsatisfied want. Nobody but Millie cared for her, really. Worse, was she worth caring for?

Both girls, as a rule, met their father with the shrinking, fearful

manner which he could not bear. Their demeanour was certainly extremely aggravating; but Colonel Alleyne himself had made any other impossible to them. With characteristic inconsistency, he first cowed them out of the last remnant of self-confidence, and then counted himself aggrieved by its conspicuous absence.

The elder son, Hugh, had proved a signal disappointment. Hugh was weak-headed, like his sisters, and wayward and violent, like his father. In a more genial and healthy atmosphere he might have turned out a brighter specimen, but lynch-law had demoralised him a little; and this senior olive-branch had, when emancipation time came, cost Colonel Alleyne a great deal of money and much genuine annoyance. He was in the army, and had lately married, rather foolishly, in India. At home he was talked of as 'poor Hugh,' and though he had ceased to be an incubus actively, it was clear he would never become a solace.

Such was the deleterious medium in which Norbert's youth had been cast. As a child he was delicate, always ailing, and the doctors, who shook their heads over his strangely excitable brain, had kept him partly out of his father's jurisdiction. Thanks to Mrs. Alleyne's sensible, motherly care, he grew up tolerably strong, and meanwhile a fair amount of independence of character had had time to develop unopposed and in a natural manner, enough to lay the train for future collisions. His musical gift, which was extraordinary, had attracted attention from his earliest childhood. No one could remember the time when Norbert was not perfectly happy, 'amusing himself' with the piano. Some one taught him the rudiments, and

his progress was startlingly rapid; but how he contrived to learn so much they hardly knew. His was one of those rarest instances when direct instruction really does seem almost superfluous, as the disciple is born above his master, and his faculty needs, to perfect itself, no teacher but exercise and experience. To music his holiday-time was entirely devoted, except when Fan dragged him away to share *her* favourite recreation of paddling, fishing, and poking in the pond. This talent made him popular at school, where otherwise his shyness might have put him at a disadvantage. His father never deigned to notice it, treating and regarding it as of no more consequence than if his son had had a natural aptitude for dancing. Except when the boy was suspected of deserting his schoolbooks for the piano, then Colonel Alleyne 'flew,' as Fan expressed it. Norbert appeared to give in, and became doubly careful to avoid, as far as possible, any allusion to the pursuit in his father's presence. Still his adherence to it in stolen hours was a crime, and any accidental reminder or indication of the extent to which it occupied his time and his thoughts resulted in such ebullitions on his father's part as made life intolerable to the whole family for an indefinite period. These were mere skirmishes, however. When Norbert was about nineteen, the climax came.

It had been years gathering. Norbert had known for long that there was a post waiting for him in his uncle's bank. The time had arrived for him to step into it.

His leaving school had been followed by a six months' interlude of enforced idleness. He had come home ill, from overwork at the examinations; and during a rather tedious convalescence,

had ample leisure and opportunity to face the truth about himself, and the turning-point in his career that was approaching.

It was fatally simple. There was a single occupation in life that made him happy, one to which all his faculties, from his brain's highest employ down to the mechanism of his fingers, seemed to tend; one to which he was actively inclined, and in which he thought, knew, he could hardly fail to excel. But that was not bookkeeping.

It was an old story so far, as old as himself. But the beginning of the metamorphosis into a resolve of what had been a desire merely, dated from Norbert's first meeting with the girl who had ever since played the part of a good genius to one who was in dire need of it.

How well, even now, they both recollect the occasion! It was years ago, at the Fernswold school-feast, where they made friends immediately, and talked music all the evening long. What a rare pleasure for Norbert to talk over the things next his heart with some one who understood them, and sympathised, as Cressida evidently did! His fine-drawn, over-sensitive temperament forbade him to pour out his mind to his schoolfriends—excellent fellows, but mere babies in character-lore, and about as capable of reading him aright as of deciphering Etruscan.

Jeanie and Millie had no minds to pour out in return, and thus did not invite confidence. Fan was young and ungentle. But Cressida went up like a morning star in Norbert's lack-lustre horizon, giving shape and brightness to objects that were misty and dull before. Of his own age, but more formed, wider in her ideas and even in her experience, as

suggestive as she was a receptive companion, Cressida won the boy's heart of hearts. He gave her his confidence, and found in her the exact mental stimulus he needed. It was under the kindly influence of her delicate encouragement and appreciation that his intention to mould his own future took shape and force, till he felt able to take his stand upon his own strength.

There came a day, memorable in the Alleyne household as a *coup d'état* in the annals of a nation. Mother and sisters could hardly believe their ears when it transpired that Norbert, without giving a hint to anybody beforehand, had told his father that he meant to decline his uncle's offer.

To screw the courage of a youth of his calibre to the sticking-point of defiance in the face of a man like Colonel Alleyne, the moving force must have been pretty irresistible; but the autocrat, aghast, never thought of that. It was some perverse fit, some idle whim, to be stamped out upon the very first symptom.

But what fit? what whim? Norbert had shown no turn for the learned professions, and a decided aversion to the army. What new idea had caused his imbecility to presume to sneer at as good a berth as a lad of his age could well desire?

Norbert, when he had steeled himself to the refusal, had not looked on farthêr—to the revelation. But now, in the heat of the combat, it came out. He turned, like a tame animal suddenly showing its teeth, rushed into plain-speaking; said he knew he must follow some profession, that he cared for nothing but music, that all his natural advantages pointed in that direction, and that a professional musician was what he wished, what he meant, to be.

Had Norbert said a professional thief, Colonel Alleyne could not have been more aghast or more irate. That at first his displeasure did not express itself actively was no good omen. He was in a white-heat, then cooled suddenly—like red-hot iron plunged into an icing stream. For a long while father and son never spoke to each other. Then, as the latter gave no sign, Colonel Alleyne opened fire with sarcasm. * Norbert would do as he pleased. England was a free country. Liberty to make a fool of himself, and bring disgrace on his betters, was every Englishman's proud birthright. In two years Norbert would be of age, and no one could interfere if he took a fancy to make himself and his family illustrious by turning crossing-sweeper. He was perfectly welcome to go and earn his living as a street-tumbler, a ventriloquist, or a fiddler (Colonel Alleyne did not see any material difference); but he would have to rely on his own precious exertions—as his father could have nothing more to do with him in these honourable callings, and having still the right to stop his son's allowance, and forbid him his house, would most certainly avail himself of it. More, the laws of the land would not allow. Such was his ultimatum; precisely what his son had expected.

But there are other laws with which Norbert had to reckon—laws of nature. The irrevocable law that makes it next to impossible for a sensitive, diffident, inexperienced, delicate lad to plunge into the struggle of life, unprepared and alone, after a dependent youth spent, materially speaking, in clover, was only one of the lions in the path. The boy was closely attached to his indulgent mother and weak half-sisters. Hugh had proved, filially and fraternally,

such a lamentable failure. Instinctively they all turned to Norbert now, and he knew it.

And Colonel Alleyne, when he persistently visited the offences of the son on the mother and sisters (whom he, in the face of direct proof to the contrary, taxed with encouraging him in the insurrection), by redoubled crustiness and intolerance of humour towards them, knew something of the strength of that indirect weapon. A system of vicarious persecution was the surest way to impair the stubborn fortitude that served Norbert well on his own behalf.

Fan, a child among them, but wide awake and the keenest of all, understood everything; felt as if she could never, never forgive her father his behaviour on this occasion, and vowed a vow on her own account, whereby she bound herself over to spend the remainder of her life in waging war against tyranny in all its forms! Could she only have been a little older to have stood by her brother now, and been felt as a prop! There is nothing more awful than for a diffident being to have to take a bold line with no one at hand to back him up. Norbert's dogged resistance showed a power in him that nobody had suspected. He had his father's inflexibility without his violence.

But the strife was unequal, and told so severely on Norbert's health and nerves, weakened by his recent attack, as to throw back his recovery seriously. A slight relapse brought back all the worst symptoms of his illness, and left him in a semi-invalidated state, which only improved by very slow degrees.

For a year he remained at home, and the civil war had to be suspended. Meanwhile the morning star was growing into a sun with

power, though still but half exercised, to outshine all else in his sphere.

What a winding charm she had! It pervaded every touch about her. What a contrast in her grace of appearance to Norbert's own dear, but apt-to-be-dowdy, sisters! At Greywell no one ever thought it worth while to put on a pretty thing or a new thing unless visitors were expected. Now it was a peculiarity of Cressida's that she seemed to have no second-best clothes. Nobody had ever seen her when she was not a model of neatness and taste, with a picturesque individuality of her own, besides, that was more subtle, and that caused her image to stand out in people's memories, apart from that of other pretty well-dressed girls, as something pleasing, *par excellence*, to dwell upon.

Norbert and she had begun by a Platonic friendship of the simplest construction, founded on a mutual liking for music and poetry, written and unwritten. That supplementary feeling of a personal adoration akin to fetishism, which had soon arisen on Norbert's part, was threatening to usurp the place of prominence. But there was a basis of sound sense in the young fellow that held romance in check—the obvious fruitlessness, and worse, of a one-sided passion still kept his, not only from declaring itself outwardly, but from becoming his sole master inwardly. Cressida will never be more than a friend to him. If he makes love to her he will not win hers, but forfeit her friendship, his dearest possession.

Interest and sympathy for him she had plenty. She could follow him in his musical aspirations, and enthusiastically admire his gift. Ah, there was much that drew her towards him. And in

the present situation she saw something fine and poetical. Here was a young man of exceptional genius, holding out firmly against the blind, headstrong, prejudiced, old-fashioned despotism of an inflexible parent, about to throw himself upon the world unaided, at the bidding of the voice within that others could not hear, the sign of the invisible hand beckoning him away. She never exactly calculated how far her moral support had emboldened Norbert to his courageous move; and when afterwards they talked over the result, and from dreams and poetry had come to considering facts connected with the struggle for existence, she grew grave. Cressida could be very practical. Norbert had but a mere trifle of his own, barely enough, in her reckoning, to keep a man from starving. Colonel Alleyne had always made him a liberal allowance, aware that by thus accustoming him to proud gentlemanly independence, and consequent ignorance of how the 'other half' of the world lives, he was tightening his hold over him. Generosity and improvidence cannot be unlearned, and minute economy and self-help taught, in a day.

Again, it must be years before Norbert could hope to achieve any particular musical success, since he would have to start in the race at a great disadvantage, without friends, without interest, without even information as to ways and means.

It was Cressida herself who, after having well pondered these things, at last advised Norbert to yield for the present. He might enter the bank, pursue his musical studies in his leisure hours, and wait. He was quite young; something might turn up to decide the future in his favour yet. He came round to her opinion the less

reluctantly, having meanwhile be-thought himself that if he had stuck to his intention then and there, left home and broken with his family, he would have lost sight of Cressida too.

So he yielded, to Fan's disappointment and the unspeakable relief of everybody else. Colonel Alleyne consented to put down what had passed as a short madness, and flattered himself that, thanks to his prompt and efficient measures, the rebellion had been victoriously quashed.

But two years had gone by, and the old truths had been brought home to him overwhelmingly. His town life was insipid, his daily business violently repugnant to him, and becoming more and more so in its dry mechanical routine. The effort to throw his energies into this channel was no invigorating exercise, but a distorting exhausting strain, aimless in his case as convict labour. There was no outcome that he saw, no reconciliation. For the pleasures by the wayside that can make mere money-getting lives tolerable he did not care, except for one, and for that one he cared a great deal too passionately to accept it as the pastime of an amateur dabbler. You cannot serve Art and mammon.

Utterly unsatisfied with himself in his present capacity, unchanged and undivided in his ambitions, such was his frame of mind when Sir Francis made him the offer. Norbert felt as if it would cost him less or nothing now to make the crowning effort, pass the Rubicon, turn his back finally on his father's house, and follow the call. The ice with Colonel Alleyne had been broken at all events. As for his mother and the girls, he persuaded himself that even his absence could hardly make things worse or Greywell more of a prison.

For himself the sacrifice of wealth was no sacrifice at all. He was entirely indifferent to luxuries. Never in his secret daydreams had he

'Breakfasted off rosewood,
Smoked through silver-mounted pipes,'

and so forth. He would have been perfectly content to scrimp in a garret, provided the garret had a piano in it. Then he was only twenty-two; plenty of time before him to make himself a name. So let him grasp this golden opportunity and rejoice in it.

Only—

Were those really tears in Cressida's eyes last night?

It is very possible to entertain and nourish a growing hope in one's heart for long and never recognise it. When Norbert had started on his walk yesterday, he had not had the remotest intention of saying to Cressida what he did say when the moment came.

It was she who, by that new and indefinable infusion of tenderness into her manner, had brought commotion into his mind. Something there had stirred, slightly, it is true, but warning of the force heaving beneath, that only asked leave to break through and carry all before it.

But these were night thoughts, and when morning dawned his buoyant hopes, the marvellous exhilaration that had sprung up so suddenly, seemed fictitious out of measure. Could anything be more baseless? He saw things in a chillier, truer perspective.

Sunday was popularly known as Doomsday in the Greywell household. Colonel Alleyne was always in a bad temper before nightfall. Morning service at Lullington Church was the event of the day. It was a sleepy service, and seemed to grow sleepier every week. The length of the after-

noon appeared preternatural until the bell rang for the nondescript meal, which was a Sunday institution in the family, and which, though by no means inviting in itself, was always hailed with joy, coming as a sign that the day was nearly at an end.

Morning church, longer even than usual, completed the sobering process on Norbert, and gave him ample time for reflection.

The last two years had made a great change in him. Cressida was sensible of that, last night when she found herself face to face with the vacillating boy grown strong, and proud, and nerved by the concentrated energy of one just about to take a resolution of moment that must colour his whole life. Other confidant he had none; not even to Fan had he mentioned Professor Mathison's proposal. He knew how her heart would leap at it, just as his had done; knew that she would say, 'Go, at all costs!' and that Cressida's unspoken 'Stay!' and the echo it awoke in his own renegade will, would, to her, be absolutely incomprehensible.

By the afternoon he was firmly convinced that the moment's paradise of yesterday was only a mad dream. Diffidence, despondency, self-contempt, told him it must be. He began composing a perfectly matter-of-fact letter to Cressida, telling her that he had quite made up his mind to profit by Sir Francis's offer, dwelling only on the bright side of the picture, but saying he would like her sanction, as his best friend and counsellor.

As he sat poring over this composition in the schoolroom, the unwonted sounds of footsteps on the gravel outside attracted his ear.

'O, mercy!' said Fan, as the door-bell rang. 'It must be some bad news; nobody would come

here for anything else on Sunday ;' and she rushed to the window and opened it.

'Are the Miss Alleynes at home?' said Cressida's voice at the front-door inquiringly.

'As if the Miss Alleynes were ever abroad on Sunday afternoons!' commented Fan contemptuously, darting out of the room into the hall in time to hear the servant's reply, 'Yes, miss,' given in the tone of one imparting a pleasant surprise.

'I'm at home!' cried Fan, rushing out in high glee and catching hold of Cressida, who, with her father, had just come from Lullington Church and the charity sermon. 'Papa's in the study. Show Mr. Landon in.' Then, as the door closed on the gentlemen, she added, 'Mamma has her Sunday headache, and is lying down. Jeanie and Millie are in the drawing-room. Let them find us out. You come to the schoolroom—do.'

Nothing loth, Cressida suffered herself to be carried off into chaos, where she was at home.

How picturesque the disordered room became when she stepped into it! Just as she might have sat for Harmony when at the organ in the church, she now stood up like the model of the fair Ladie of an old English ballad. There were several possible heroine-types in Cressida, as in all the loveliest faces. As usual, art had its share in the picture. The nice folds her dress took, as if by preference, its freshness and piquancy; the little boots, that seemed never to get shabby; the sound gloves,—one and all were a wonder and puzzle to Fan, who tried her clothing very severely.

Now Cressida had come on purpose to signify to Norbert her advice that he should do the precise thing which he was setting down as his intention in the letter he

was making up; which letter, when he saw her, went promptly out of his head.

'Papa and I have come here to beg for some tea,' observed Cressida. 'Were you practising, Norbert?' He was writing on the piano, the only available table in the room.

'No such luck,' returned Fan grimly, for him. 'Don't you know the piano's dumb on Sundays? Not that papa himself objects to that innocent amusement, but he won't let us play because of the servants. I hope ours are properly grateful for all that we do or leave undone on account of their morals. Lucky for me that books make no noise, and I can read what I please at all times and seasons without the servants being any the wiser or the foolisher.'

Cressida laughed, and asked vaguely after Millie and Jeanie. For the first time she and Norbert felt a shadow of embarrassment in each other's presence.

'They've gone to straighten their hair,' said Fan, the inexorable, 'and put on fresh collars, I expect.' In fact, Sunday callers being almost unheard of at Greywell, Cressida had surprised the Miss Alleynes no neater than they should be. 'It'll take them some little time. Are you hungry, Cressida?'

'Very,' said Cressida. 'Why?'

'I warn you we sha'n't get five-o'clock tea before six, *because of the servants*. They go to afternoon church, and take an unconscionable time walking home. I know, though. Walnuts! Come along!'

There was a famous tree in the field at the bottom of the garden, and this move was a little *ruse* on Fan's part to keep Cressida as long as possible to Norbert and herself. The 'dodge' was per-

fectly successful. The trio at the point where the big tree stood were invisible from the house, and they all began fumbling in the grass for the sparsely-fallen fruit.

'You'll spoil your gloves,' quoth Fan considerably.

'They're common ones,' said Cressida; '*you'll* spoil your hands.'

'Not much to spoil there,' said Fan cheerfully. 'I didn't pay for them either, and sha'n't be expected to buy new ones, whatever happens to these.'

For several minutes they all seemed deep in the fascinating occupation of turning up nutshells among the decaying leaves, each exploring a different piece of ground.

Choosing a moment when Fan was at a safe distance, Norbert came up to pour his handful of fruit into the basket which Cressida held.

'When shall I see you again?' she asked, with a gentle significance.

'At Christmas, I suppose.'

'Not till then?' with an impatient sigh.

'By that time it must be decided,' said Norbert, speaking low, that Fan, who was approaching, should not overhear. 'If I do nothing, the matter decides itself. Sir Francis goes without me. And I see that if I put off the step now, the more difficult it will become, impossible at last. I think the Tsar gets worse and worse every year.'

'So he does,' said Fan, who had come up in time for the last sentence, and chimed in instantly. 'Have you heard, Cressida? Last night we were treated to ever such a row; and all about nothing at all, as nine out of ten rows are. It's a shocking waste of tissue and nerve-force on everybody's part. Ah, if I were the

father of a family—' But here the others broke in with a burst of laughter, the girl stopped, with an eloquent nod that finished her sentence, and returned to the walnut hunt. Gradually the other two edged away.

'Have you decided—have you thought more what you shall do?' said Cressida pressingly.

Her voice, her intonation, her look, all acted upon Norbert with that sweet, persuasive influence that forces a mind to turn itself inside out.

'How can I?' he said, with an abrupt vehemence that took her aback.

'Norbert!' she murmured half pleadingly.

Both (Fan had providentially disappeared altogether) were bending down as if to grope for the buried nuts. Cressida raised her head and met his eyes. 'I love you, I love you!' was written all over Norbert's face as he proceeded with a particularly sober, matter of fact, and wise speech, proving that he was in a difficult pass, that the wisdom of such an exceptional move as he was contemplating depended on his obtaining exceptional success, and that strong liking would hardly justify it unless he were sure he had strong talent.

'If you doubt that now,' said Cressida, 'you will not long.'

Of course he knew that if he remained mewed up in the bank his health and spirits, his whole self, would suffer; nothing could save him from becoming a confirmed social failure, nothing except—Norbert hated himself for his want of eloquence. What a store of words should he have poured out now!

They were not needed to tell Cressida how matters stood. She knew she was being called upon to dictate the watchword of a life.

Again it gratified her *amour-*

propre; she would have liked to prolong the moment, to taste the pleasure before taking up the burden of responsibility.

'Dear Norbert,' she said, putting her hand on his arm, and speaking more gravely than she often did, 'I think you should certainly not say "No" to Professor Matthison in a hurry. It involves so much. Surely he can wait a little while—till Christmas. Give yourself time to make quite sure what you ought to do. Because, Norbert, am I worth the sacrifice of the thing you love best?'

'Not best, not best!' muttered Norbert impulsively.

He had turned very pale. The faintest, most delicate smile hovered on Cressida's lips.

'Are you *quite* sure?' she repeated playfully.

Before Norbert could speak, a rattling shower of nuts from above pattered down on their necks and startled them out of their sweet everythings. A merry laugh overhead followed. They looked up; and lo! there was Fan perched on a branch of the walnut-tree.

'It's so jolly up here,' she shouted. 'You've no notion. Oxygen to any amount, and such a view right over the house. I see the Lullington young men with their proposing coats on, taking their Sunday walks, each with his bright particular young woman on his arm. What geese they do look, spooning!'

But for the love-making going on immediately under her eyes, Fan was totally blind. 'So true is it that one can look at an object without seeing it, if one looks in the wrong way.

CHAPTER III.

LAST JULY.

JUST as a sceptic, who has once seen a ghost, or a miracle, or some trick of clairvoyance or mesmerism, looks back with a queer, mixed feeling on the moment when the evidence of his senses seemed flatly to contradict the creed of his soul, so now, to Cressida, appears a past scene in her life as a glimpse into the mysteries of natural magic.

It is just five months to-day since—she often recalls the incident for the sake of the sequel—Cressida had a rare surprise.

She had a virtuous-industrious fit upon her that day, and had just returned from the school where, for the last hour, her scholars had been strongly impressing upon her, in their several ways, the necessity for an instant reform in English spelling, and now she sat sewing brown-paper covers on some tracts that her father wanted for distribution. Her head was running, as if by way of contrast, on some lines she had been reading the day before:

'Another world!
And why this world, this common world,
to be
A makeshift, a mere foil, how fair soever,
To some fine life to come?'

Perhaps it was only through some insight into 'earth's immortalities' that Cressida, for one, had the chance to gain hope or intelligence of higher things.

Sunk in her thoughts she never heard the house door-bell when presently it rang, and the first hint she got that a visitor was at hand was from the entrance of a well-meaning but nervous parlour-maid, obviously flurried at being surprised in morning *négligée*, and pronouncing some impossible name, of which nothing was to be made.

Cressida started up in confusion, for the rustling of silk in the passage outside had suddenly put her out of conceit with her pretty cotton gown, and her hands were dusty; that was thanks to the tracts. A lady sailed in, and Cressida, for a moment, forgot everything in her surprise.

'What! Elise de Saumarez?' with the little half-theatrical tone and gesture that came naturally to her sometimes.

'My darling Cressida!'

A lively but rather ostentatious embrace followed. Mrs. de Saumarez and her darling Cressida were but slightly acquainted. Their intimacy, which only was a few months old, had been formed in the course of a few days which they chanced to spend at a country house, where both had gone down for a ball. There was, moreover, more than twenty years difference in their ages; but Mrs. de Saumarez had impressed Cressida favourably from the first, by her clever toilettes, and afterwards by her powers of conversation.

There might be a latent affinity somewhere asserting itself. At all events Cressida was speedily taken with a certain liking and admiration, seasoned with envy, for the epicurean, life-enjoying widow, upon whom four at least of the seven ages sat so lightly. The widow's ways, indeed, seldom failed to exact for her that confidence and deference due to superior social skill and address, practical intelligence, and knowledge of the world; and over Cressida they soon came to acquire a rather demonic sway.

'Cressida alone!' she ejaculated, deliberately beginning a round of inspection of the room and furniture, waiving ceremony with an assurance that would have struck the girl as ill-bred, had she not been so taken up with an annoy-

ing dread of what Elise would think of the homely, conventional parsonage,—Elise, whose little town nest in Mayfair, where Cressida had spent a couple of days not long ago, was grace and elegance illustrated. The tasteful house-decorations, the treasure of books and pictures and rarities, mostly presents from the artists, authors, or enterprising travellers of the day (for Elise knew everybody, and was one of those whom great men delight to honour in a small way), would rise before her now in grotesque contrast, as Mrs. de Saumarez went round, explaining, as she did so, how she chanced to be in the neighbourhood, on a flying visit to an old friend in Lullington.

'What are you doing?' she said curiously, taking up with her finger and thumb one of the little paper books which Cressida fondly hoped to have been concealed by the sofa-cushion. *Bill Sikes's Conversion, told by Himself*, she read aloud.

Both burst out laughing. This was not the species of literature they had been used to read together and discuss.

'Is this how you spend your time?' she asked comically.

'You see that it is,' said Cressida expressively. 'O, I assure you that I am—can be—very good,' and as Elise raised her eyebrows incredulously, she continued, 'I *really* work in the parish quite hard sometimes: ask papa. I teach in the school, and the curate says I get the boys on much faster than he can. Then I've a number of old women on my visiting-list, and knit them petticoats for Christmas presents.'

'And attend to the outside, at least, of these little books,' said Elise, laying down the tract carefully. 'I admire you, Cressida, and take the good character you

give of yourself. Perhaps I ought to think twice before I offer to carry you away from all these good works.'

'Carry me away!' repeated Cressida, amazed.

'Not permanently,' said Elise, laughing; 'that's a heavier responsibility than even I should be prepared to undertake. Cressida, will you come with me to Switzerland?'

'Of course I will,' Cressida exclaimed, starting up, her eyes, her face, brightening suddenly. 'O, how delightful of you to think of it! Tell me everything, you dear, dear creature!'

'It's a very short story. My doctor has ordered me away. I've been overworking myself this season, it appears. Late hours, heated rooms, too many little dinners, gay suppers, and so on. Moderation is becoming impossible nowadays. My friends tell me I'm going off, growing thin, and look at least forty!' Cressida tried to appear politely concerned, and as if she did not know that Elise, in so doing, would be looking under her age. 'They prescribe Switzerland, the "playground of Europe," and, besides, the Convalescent Home for Europeans who break down under the high pressure and competition of modern society. And I should like to take you. I shall consider it a favour on your part if you'll let me.'

'It is so good of you!' said Cressida effusively.

'No, it is not,' said Mrs. de Saumarez, who affected free thought and plain speech to the extreme of cynicism. 'I never take credit for what I don't deserve. If I were to advertise for a "lady companion," I should have to pay her expenses, just as I wish to pay yours, and I should get no amusement out of her—feel her a clog half the time. If

I joined a friend going on her own account like myself, we should probably never agree, and come back enemies for life. But I like you; and you, whether or not you like me, will be so glad of the change that perhaps you won't be in a hurry to quarrel.' Elise's effrontery always inspired Cressida with a certain respect for the moral courage this quasi-brutal candour seemed to imply. 'Now, dear, will you come?'

'Will I?' said Cressida, according her friend a perfectly spontaneous embrace this time. 'If only papa—'

'What! Has papa a voice in the matter?' said Elise, with malicious surprise. 'Can you not manage him better than that? He mustn't object.'

'If he does,' said Cressida, 'I'll do something desperate—get up a cough, paint my cheeks white, and coax a rising young doctor I know at Lullington to prescribe mountain air for me.'

Any such manœuvres proved unnecessary. Poor Mr. Landon was most unselfishly delighted. He was the last man to wish his daughter to be moped. On the contrary, he always liked her to have plenty of amusement; and he never could understand why she pined for Sorrento, where there were no balls, or dinners, or garden-parties, or archery-meetings, or social diversions of any sort to compare with the dissipation Lullington afforded. But then women are so perverse.

Cressida, never robust, had lately been drooping a little, and this tour every one agreed was the right thing at the right moment. As for Cressida, she voted her friend a trump-card worth more than all the kings of hearts and diamonds in the pack. Who, she thought gaily, would not be, like Elise, a rich widow, and perfectly

free! Mrs. de Saumarez had no children, and her family cares were summed up in a stepson, Alec,—her husband's only child by a former marriage,—an officer in the army, and at present in India. For the rest, it was her avowed maxim that life's cares should be written in sand, its joys in stone.

A fortnight later they were off, and busy improving their acquaintance. Elise, under the trying ordeal of that extraordinary protraction of the *vis-à-vis* relationship which such travelling involves, proved herself an exceptionally tolerable companion. True, she was a little given in company to patronising Cressida, which annoyed the latter, and a good deal given in company to monopolising the attention of the male element, which annoyed her secretly even more. On the other hand, in a *tête-à-tête*, Elise was always diverting, and her conversation, for Cressida, 'combined instruction with amusement' in a remarkable manner. For in the philosophy of fashion, and certain important branches of social science, naturally ill-understood by reformers, theorists, and purely literary people, Elise was a rare adept—a kind of Parisian Solomon. What hearty laughs, what whimsical arguments and speculations, they indulged in together! What curious utopias and experiments in living were discussed between them—within four ears! What game they made of their fellow-travellers, directly the latter's backs were turned! Elise had a very genius for extracting fun for herself from the most stupid people, the most trivial incidents, and scruples of any sort were to her unknown.

She was a woman in whom one good quality, tact, had to do duty, and did it ably, for the cardinal

virtues, in most of which she was radically wanting. She had the honesty of a Machiavelli, the modesty of a trooper, the charity of Mephistopheles; but then she had tact, and as she preferred not to shock the greater sensitiveness of her fellow-creatures by word or deed, she seldom erred in this respect, and passed in general for a model woman and widow, and a remarkably benevolent person.

Cressida, falling in readily with her tone, had led Elise into presuming entirely on their mutual inward sympathy, and she was frankness itself with her new friend. Cressida, looking back on all this, laughs, but blushes also at the thought of things she was led on to say, and which might well lead Elise to hail her as a kindred, cynical spirit. But also to this, the first part of their journey, she seldom recurs; she does not recollect it vividly; her thoughts fly rather to the sequel, which swamped the rest in her impressions.

They had been travelling by leisurely stages across the Bernese Oberland. Elise had no taste for untrodden peaks and unfrequented valleys, where you get a large appetite and nothing to satisfy it, and primitive hotels so dull that any Caliban would be welcome for company. It was with an effort that she made up her mind to a mild ascent to a popular mountain resort, lovely among the loveliest, but accessible in a *chaise à porteurs*.

But once there, she declared she was charmed with the inn and the spot, and professed an intention to stay some weeks. Now as she had said this at every other attractive halting-place throughout the journey, and never failed to change her mind within forty-eight hours, Cressida did not attach much weight to the remark. A

week of rainy weather, however, kept them prisoners by force; and by the end of that time Elise found herself so comfortably settled that she remained voluntarily a fixture, and decided to make Almenwald their head-quarters until their time came for flitting home again.

Cressida acquiesced, indifferently. She *was* enjoying herself, she felt certain, though perhaps rather less than she had expected, or not in the way that she had expected. Out of the scenery she got less enjoyment than, as it seemed to her, she ought and might. Here the companionship of Mrs. de Saumarez was fatal to ideal pleasure. True, Elise professed a great partiality for the mountains, talked of them severally by pet names and familiarly as if they were her *protégés* or intimate friends. But that the proper study of mankind is man was a truth she could never lose sight of for a moment; thus, to her, the meanest tourist that came, stared, and went was more suggestive and welcome—if only as a source of ridicule—than the whole Oberland chain, or the course of the Lutschine or Aletsch glacier.

Cressida, with all her addiction to chit-chat, did tire occasionally of cutting up one party after another, noting the vulgarities and absurdities, bad French and German and marvellous toilettes into which poor human nature may be betrayed. It was a great relief sometimes to slip away, if only for five minutes, from her companion, stroll a few steps from the inn, and with a kind of rebound let the poetical element of her nature have its way. Then she could revel in the artificial paradise of imagination, feel a mysterious affinity with a fir-tree, an avalanche, a snow-peak, a gentian flower. But, when in the midst of this prime

pleasure, one of those eternal universal pleasures that make the whole world kin, she would hear Mrs. de Saumarez calling shrilly,

'Cressida, Cressida, come here! Where are you wandering to? *Il y a du nouveau, ma chère.*'

With a petulant movement, and a helpless 'I am *not* her lady-companion,' Cressida, her chain of thought broken, went to join her friend and hear all about the latest arrivals, the fussy papas, fat mammas, sheepish young men, masculine young women, all of whom Elise delighted to satirise. There was nobody at the inn worth anything but slaughtering, she decided. Cressida agreed with her there; but of the game, in itself, of 'slaughtering my neighbour,' she was the first to tire.

A sunshiny morning had brought a general exodus. All left but themselves. The afternoon was showery; and once more Cressida found herself a fixture in the hotel sitting-room, poring in desperation over stale newspapers. She read and re-read sensational accounts of recent Alpine accidents, ran her eye for the twentieth time over lists of travellers entered at the sundry hotels in divers countries more or less remote. Towards evening the sky cleared again, and Cressida wearied to death of imprisonment and sitting still. Elise was safe up-stairs in her room. Cressida suddenly perceived that the opposite peaks were taking delicious colours in the fading sunlight. If she walks a few hundred yards beyond the hotel along the mountain-side, she will get a still grander panorama, and have it all to herself. Without even waiting to get her hat, she made her escape hastily and slipped out.

In this valley the wanderer breaks boldly into the heart of Alpine privacy. Cressida has gone

only a little way, but already the undulating slopes have hidden the hotel and the half dozen *châlets* of which the settlement she has left behind consists. Then she comes to a standstill, looking down the deep, narrow, precipitous valley. It is like a gigantic crevasse, a slit in the mountains; and across it, directly facing her, stands the close line of lofty snow-peaks that seem to shut out the world and the sky—the Maiden, the Monk, and the Ogre.

These heights opposite are barren and rugged indeed, but not so the grass-grown slope where she stands. A sweet scent comes from patches of clover and vetches planted here and there; the delicate grass of Parnassus springs up around her feet; ferns, mosses, and lichens innumerable break through the crevices of the half-buried boulders of rock that stud the hill-side.

But, as if seeking a foil to this calm beauty, Cressida's thoughts have flown back to the tragical story she had just been reading in *Galignani* of an accident—was it an accident?—which was stated to have 'thrown a gloom over Chamounix.' Only a young man who had lost his life in those parts under circumstances that made his fate appear self-sought. But the absence of any apparent motive made such a step incredible in the eyes of some people, though not to such curious inquirers as Cressida and Elise.

'Poor fool!' said the latter, when she read; 'he had always the moon to cry for.'

'Was he a fool?' thought Cressida. 'If these unsatisfied wishes, high thoughts we cannot realise, be incurable and intolerable, is there any escape but one—*euthanasia*?'

The *tædium vitæ* of a young lady of twenty-two hardly expects

to meet with anything but a smile and a contempt, not loud but deep, for a girl's senseless chimerical longings for she knows not what, her vague dissatisfaction she knows not why.

At least Cressida's habit of mind drove her to require from herself a positive reason for everything in her, even her disgusts. She hated her life and despised herself, yet felt unable to regenerate things in general or Cressida Landon in particular. She was beginning to have a conviction that she would never know anything better than fragments and beginnings, abortive in the main, a taste of this and a snatch of that, half experiences that left her as far as ever from an approach to the ideal of a woman's existence. She had gone on thus, led by her restless curiosity to try various types in turn—play Dorcas in the parish one week, the girl of the period with friends in London the next, Lydia White the next, Lydia Languish the next; and now, beholding everything she had tried, she saw that it was very bad indeed.

She was only a weak girl, but wise men have reached the same pitfall by a more circuitous route, and the enemy betraying them is much the same—an inability of the moral nature to keep at the higher level of the intellectual, complicated in Cressida's case by her delicate, sensitive, feminine organism.

She had been standing—how long she hardly knew—on a ledge overhanging the slope, gazing down into the ravine beneath—so deep it was, that the stream winding through seemed a mere silver thread—rather enjoying the precarious sensation, and not in the least dizzy. *This* was not the sort of thing that turned her head.

'Excuse me, I think perhaps you do not know that you are standing in a very unsafe position.'

A manly voice, speaking in a tone of polite insistence. Looking round, Cressida saw her interlocutor; a stranger, an Alpine climber by his garb, and the genuine article probably, she thought—for his was not the dapper, got-up, semi-courier-like style that suggests a stage Alpinist, but the well-approved stamp of the unpretentious, quiet, roughly but thoroughly equipped British peak-hunter. With a rapid glance she had taken his measure, taken it favourably, somehow—the measure of a forcible, significant, and not unpleasant personality. She did not, however, choose to take his hint, and move from her station immediately.

'O, I am never giddy, thank you,' she said, smiling.

'If your head is quite safe, your feet are not,' he persisted; 'the ground is most insecure after the rains. You are standing on a stone that looks loosened already; it might give way any moment. And then—well, there are rocks and shrubs to catch hold of below; you might save yourself, of course, or—'

'Or I might not,' finished Cressida quietly, taking rather a firmer stand, not from fresh nervousness, but thinking it more gracious. Her deliberate rashness seemed to impress and annoy the traveller. She perceived this, and a mischievous impulse tempted her to provoke him further by her obstinacy.

'Have you heard that there was a fatal accident of the sort the other day at Chamounix, where I was staying, as it happened?' he urged, rather peremptorily.

'Yea,' said Cressida; 'I read the account. I was just thinking about it.'

'Have you set your heart on following that wretched Frenchman's example?'

'It was done on purpose, then?' said Cressida inquiringly.

He hesitated. 'Nobody knew, or ever will know, exactly how it happened.'

She smiled oddly. He stood irresolute, anything but anxious to prolong the dialogue—the adventure rather bored him—but feeling not quite clear whether the young lady were in her right mind or not, and therefore whether he could be justified in leaving her to commit whatever absurdity the fit should prompt.

'What can have driven him to do it?' she said.

'What mostly drives people to suicide, I suppose—egotism.'

Cressida looked up at him with a puzzled expression.

'But how? That self-love should lead one to destroy oneself seems very strange; sounds like a paradox, surely.'

'I mean,' he said, with an inkling that a little sermonising here might do no harm, 'that unless the individual is entirely wrapped up in himself, he never need want for sufficient outside interest and pleasure to reconcile him to the drudgery of existence. So long as he can feel with other people and care at all about them, there will always be enough left to live for.'

Cressida, whilst he was speaking, had, almost unconsciously, shifted her footing, and now stood on firm ground. The tourist, pleased with the effect of his first sermon, and satisfied that the damsel was not seriously meditating suicide, raised his cap and passed on. But still mindful of that eerie look he had seen in her eyes at first, when he had gone a few steps he stopped, glancing back as if involuntarily.

'Don't be afraid,' said Cressida, laughing outright this time; 'it is quite true that at the moment when you spoke to me I *was* speculating upon that disagreeable subject. But I only came out to enjoy the sunset on the mountains.'

'What a very strange way of enjoying it!' he ejaculated, coming to a standstill.

'Ah, but there something comes in that I cannot help: I think it is the contrast, the overwhelming contrast between the splendour and freshness of all this, pointing to the grand Alpine landscape, 'and the ridiculous pettiness and sameness of one's own life, that might so madden one as to make one wish to throw away the last altogether,' she replied, in desperation and apology.

'I fail utterly to see the force of that,' he replied provokingly. 'You mean, then, that you would prefer all scenery to be tame and flat, for fear it should put you out of conceit with your house and home?'

Cressida was easily worsted in an argument. She answered only by an appealing little smile, which struck him at the moment as rather affected. His own countenance changed slightly; he smiled too, but less agreeably, lifted his cap, and went on his way.

'At all events, I've relieved his fears as to the chances of coming in for a second Alpine tragedy to-night,' thought Cressida mirthfully, following him with her eyes as he went.

It was soon time for her to return to the hotel herself. When she reëntered the sitting-room, there sat her Alpiner, in brisk conversation with Elise de Saumarez, who had just come downstairs, and both were so busy giving each other a gay, glad recog-

nition, that neither took notice of Cressida's entrance.

'Well met on the Weissberg,' Elise was saying. 'I knew you were disporting yourself somewhere in these latitudes, Mr. Halliday, but I never think of looking out for you anywhere beneath the level of eternal snow.'

'A great mistake. As if a man's next thought, when he has got to the top of a mountain, was not how to get down again as quickly as he possibly can.'

'What new peaks have you been violating? Shall we hear next season of the Stefano Pass or the Cima Halliday?'

'You know I gave up that sort of thing long ago. I've been up nothing higher than an ant-hill for many years.'

They talked on thus fluently, like people in the habit of playing verbal battledore and shuttlecock together, and for some while, till Cressida began to grow impatient and to wonder if she had suddenly become invisible. At last Elise, seeming all at once to perceive her presence, turned to her, saying blandly,

'Cressida, this is my old friend Mr. Stephen Halliday, whom you must have often heard me speak of, or at all events quote,' she said, with a side smile at him. 'Now, Mr. Halliday, let me introduce you to Miss Landon. She and I deserve to get a first prize at your next University Examinations for women. For we have been travelling together for three weeks and not quarrelled yet.'

He bowed, with a ready smile at Cressida, saying,

'But, Mrs. de Saumarez, your friend and I have not waited for an introduction.'

'The Jungfrau introduced us,' said Cressida, laughing.

Elise looked puzzled—she disliked being puzzled.

'What! Do you mean that you have met before?'

'Half an hour ago. I ventured to warn Miss Landon off what I thought was treacherous ground.'

'That's right,' Elise rejoined philosophically. 'You will be very good friends, I know. Don't tell me, Mr. Halliday, that you are off to-morrow up the Finster Aar or the Schreckhorn, or on some neck-or-nothing excursion from which, humanly speaking, we cannot reasonably hope to see you return alive.'

'You ought to know me well enough,' he retorted, with a significant thrust at Cressida, 'to be sure that, however little value I may set upon my neck, I have no fancy for risking it to get rid of my ennui.'

Elise congratulated herself that, for that evening at least, they would not want for the staff of amusement. Other travelling parties had arrived, and the conversation became general, Elise and Mr. Halliday taking the leading parts. Cressida, who preferred to be first or nowhere, retired to the post of a mere listener, which struck her as more irksome than usual that night. What amends she could make to herself she did, by criticising Mr. Halliday with the utmost severity, multiplying unflattering comments as fast as she could,—modifying them, however, as fast as made. He was ugly, yes, at first sight. But it was, so to speak, a harmonious ugliness—a slightly harsh type improved in the stamping in. The well-shaped forehead, marked eyebrows, steady eye, firm but not stiff mouth, all bore the characters of thought and intellectual strength that impart to a face an authority over the mere eye-pleasure of beauty. Such a face will grow, not pall, upon you. He liked the sound of his own

voice, she decided; but then she must agree with him there. It was a firm, well-pitched voice, not loud—an excellent thing in man—and evidently well accustomed to the exercise of speaking. He was too dictatorial and rather conscious, and under his guise of courteous attention she saw, or fancied she divined, a sort of kindly contempt breaking through. Yes, he was conceited; but rather by force of underrating his neighbour than of overrating himself. He was ever threatening weaker vessels with a set down—a sort of flinging of your ignorance in your face—fear of which was enough to close Cressida's lips. She could not turn off a discomfiture into a joke, like Elise, and yet she sometimes felt that her reason and her instinct confuted some of his paradoxes, only he had, and she had not, the right fencing words.

Little did Mr. Halliday reckon of the strict censorship he was undergoing from that young, slender, fragile-looking girl, with the soft pale face, prettily-shaped head, and downcast eyes—eyes that, when lifted, utterly metamorphosed the impression conveyed by the countenance; the kitten-like caressable softness, the childish delicacy of the rounded little nose and mobile lips, were merged then in an expression surprising from its effect. It was like lifting a veil and giving a glimpse beneath of the spirit-beauty, the half-magnetic attractiveness of a young witch.

When he did glance at her, for glance at her he did pretty often, it was to trace or fancy a resemblance in her to some old Italian picture he had seen—Mantegna, was it, or Luca Signorelli; some allegorical beauty or portrait-angel; that is to say, the likeness of some Mantuan Muse or Grace, or some seraphic-looking Florentine.

'Who is this Mr. Halliday?' Cressida put the question rather abruptly, as she was brushing her hair in Elise's room that night.

'The worst *parti* in England,' replied the lady suavely. 'One of those "all or nothing" men, whose trumpet everybody is in such a hurry to sound, and who seem afterwards rather to enjoy holding back and making fools of their trumpeters. Halliday was quite the most distinguished University man of his year, raised the greatest expectations, and, perhaps, if he had lived a quarter of a century ago, when young men had a little imagination, and therefore a little more enthusiasm, he might have fulfilled them. But in these days we are above anything so vulgar as ambition. He does not care for popularity or notoriety—nor will he follow his advantage at the expense of his inclinations, which lead him to dry literary and scientific work of a kind that brings neither gold nor glory for the first twenty years. He was fellow and tutor of his college and so on, and devotes himself a good deal to education.'

'Indeed,' said Cressida, 'I should never have taken him for the schoolmaster abroad, you know—though to be sure our acquaintance did begin by his scolding me for standing where the ground was slippery.'

Elise looked at her with curiosity, then continued:

'O, I never meant to tell you that Stephen Halliday's a mere prig or pedagogue. If he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, he has taken lessons in other opposition schools since.' (Cressida smiled.) "*Gelebt und geliebt*," for instance, and become a member of the Alpine Club. Whatever Halliday engages in, he seems to think it due to himself to carry

it a step farther than most people. He has been over the Knochen-drachen Pass—never attempted before; he carried off I forget how many improbable prizes and scholarships in the same year; and the story goes that that beautiful but eccentric Lady Haughmond wanted to run away with him, and it was with difficulty that he dissuaded her. It was quite an infatuation on her part, and he behaved exceedingly well.'

'What varied accomplishments!' said Cressida, laughing. 'The list sounds quite imposing.'

'Don't give your heart to him, Cressida, unless you will be content to get back false change for it. I'm sorry to say I consider my friend Halliday the most arrant flirt in the kingdom.'

'I thought we were agreed,' said Cressida gaily, 'that for me a man is not a man unless he has a clear five thousand a year.'

Mr. Halliday had not contemplated a long stay at Almenwald; but a rainy spell followed, which kept him prisoner waiting for a fine day—that never came—to make certain mountain-excursions in the neighbourhood.

Three weeks later dry weather set in, but found him there still, and farther off from leaving than when he first came.

Everybody knows the singular rapidity with which people get to know each other intimately when boxed up under the roof of a Swiss hotel. Such intimacies are often cheating. One has become so thoroughly familiar with the goods, so to speak, in the shop-window, that one is apt to forget that there are inner stores of character which in most cases it must take time to get to know.

For Cressida, who had plenty of penetration of character, those few weeks had been marked by the steady increase and deepening of

that first favourable impression. She had often compared herself mentally to the fabulous princess with such a terribly sharp eye for the shortcomings of her suitors, dismissing them summarily one by one as too short or too tall, too thin or too stout, too wise or too foolish, for her taste. All young men, she had sometimes thought, might be divided into three classes—there was first your *jeune premier*, generally good-looking, often weak and light-headed, but with delicate perceptions that teach him the right way to pay his addresses; next, your muscular ‘good fellow,’ the noble savage of modern society, the man of few words, but who thinks he may be heard for his much strength; and thirdly, your man of study and culture, generally plain, too often conceited and touchy, but interesting to talk to. And though perfectly alive to the attractions both of the fine sensibilities of the first class, the manliness of the second, and the lively minds of the third, there was a certain pleasure in feeling herself in some ways superior to all three. But Halliday could not be classed off so simply. This compound of muscular philosopher and philosophical flirt, she must admit, was rather rare, quite imposing, as she had said. Somehow there was a pleasure in acknowledging him unhesitatingly as her superior, a pleasure sweetened by a subtle sense that what made this superiority so apparent to her was *not* the incalculable distance between his man’s wisdom and her mere woman’s wit, but rather her own keenly appreciative power that taught her the right value of what stupid or narrow-minded girls would not know how or why to admire.

Cressida had had too much love offered her to be given to imagin-

ing people at her feet merely because she wished to see them there. From Mr. Halliday’s manner to her, she knew quite well she had *not* made the impression she would have liked to make. He depreciated her politely, thought of her as a child, only half a rational being; and though he talked to her a good deal and on all sorts of subjects, he had a provoking air of listening without attending to what she said.

‘How do you like Mr. Halliday?’ said Elise to her one day, casually.

‘O, I like him,’ said Cressida frostily; ‘but really your warning was superfluous, quite. I can see the sort of man that he is. You say women have made fools of themselves for him. I cannot understand it. He makes it so evident that he despises women from the depths of his masculine—head.’

‘All men do that,’ said Elise philosophically; ‘it’s only a question of degree.’

‘Well, and this is the superlative, and I don’t like it,’ said Cressida, laughing, and turning away.

‘What do you think of my little friend Cressida?’ Halliday was asked, in his turn. ‘A clever girl, is she not?’

‘O, very,’ he replied carelessly. For what he had chiefly noticed about her was that she had beautiful eyes. And he continued to let the widow monopolise him in conversation.

It was a notable fact that though Mrs. de Saumarez was past forty, with sandy hair and eyelashes, inclined to be stout, and without a brilliant gift or accomplishment to boast of, yet most men would leave any other woman to talk to her. Cressida had perceived this before, with a little natural irritation, which in

this case was becoming sharper and sharper.

Why should not she be every bit as entertaining as Elise? Accordingly, though against the grain in this instance, she threw herself into the cynical current in which Elise's flow of soul was apt to run. Mr. Halliday's acquiescence in it, for amusement's sake, Cressida took for approval. She forgot herself sometimes; in her ambition to say clever things said much that she had better not, and that she certainly could never have made good. For in her secret soul there had grown up the keenest desire to win some sort of admiring notice from this man. It piqued her beyond measure that whilst Norbert and others adored her as a kind of angel of light, and others, like Joe Kennedy, as the most clever and interesting of girls, he should have nothing for her but the admiration one might bestow on a picture.

Yet so it was. For Halliday had not troubled himself at all about her intellect, and had seen more faults than beauties in her disposition. Hitherto she appeared to him simply as a pretty girl.

But what a pretty girl! Easy to find fault with her fair face, but impossible not to find other fair faces insipid beside it.

One evening this struck him particularly. She and some other young people staying in the hotel had arranged some *tableaux vivants* for the general amusement. They were very successful. Cressida, who officiated as lord of misrule, was able to choose her own characters, and having a keen artistic faculty and intense power of facial expression, chose them well and looked them to admiration. She appeared successively as Beatrice Cenci, Mary Queen of Scots,

Persephone, her own namesake, and the Sibylline Oracle. Everybody was surprised and delighted. When she came down afterwards, having by general request kept on her sibylline costume, Mr. Halliday was the only person present who did not overwhelm her with compliments. But meeting his eyes, their look always stung her: it did so now, but the bitter was merged in the sweet of a sensation of triumph, such as it was—she read there the knowledge that she had won a victory. But could she follow it up?

Be that as it may, it comes to pass that Cressida, among the rubbish of her recollections of this sort, has one that is not to be swept away—something that shines like a diamond among paste-stones to this hour.

Elise de Saumarez was a late riser. Mr. Halliday, now that their stay at Almenwald was fast drawing to a close, would rally her at times on having spent six weeks there and never seen the morning effects, let alone a sunrise. Cressida, wishing to take away the reproach, so far as it touched herself, rose at daybreak one of their last mornings, and went out for a stroll along the sides of the steep narrow gorge. When she came to the point where three weeks ago she had been caught in a brown study, she went no farther; but her thoughts to-day were all sunshine and rose-light.

The freshness of that morning was something untold, untellable. Everything seemed as if it had just been created; the unbreathed air, untrodden grass, unsought flowers just opened. Have you seen a butterfly the instant it springs from its chrysalis-cage, with that ineffable bloom on its wings it can hardly retain an hour? Cressida stood in the

midst of the scene inhaling its freshness at every pore. O, it was regenerative! A vision of eternal truths eternally graven on Nature, though men and women lose sight of them.

'Did not I say so?' said Mr. Halliday, who had come up, and been watching her, unperceived by Cressida, in her aspirative enthusiasm. 'This is what I wanted you to see.'

'I am not so unconquerably lazy as you thought, am I?' she said, noting the pleased smile on his face at finding her out of doors. 'I don't at all agree with your poets, who are always praising sleep as the highest good, and I feel sure they have never been in Switzerland. What do you say to this for an Elysium, as a change from the Garden of Proserpine?'

'Yet,' he observed, 'one ought not to judge of these places entirely from their appearance in their holiday month, which is, after all, but the exception to their general existence. The greater part of it they spend buried and bound in snow and ice; that is their normal state, and summer but a short respite that they are allowed.'

'Just to help them to bear the rest, I suppose,' said Cressida, with a smile; 'the pleasure to reconcile them to the drudgery of life.'

They were sauntering aimlessly along the mountain-side, and having forsaken the path, and strayed a little way down the slope, soon lost sight of the human habitations above them. They seemed utterly alone in the intensity of that Alpine solitude. The lazy chimes of cattle-bells from distant invisible valleys behind the mountains served but to enhance the effect of the stillness and isolation, catching the ear faintly, like sounds from another world. Presently they stopped and stood side by side in silence, Cressida looking

straight before her and with a feeling as if in that moment she, too, might have cast off all wear and tear from her mind, and stand there as free and untarnished as the campanulas that had just burst into flower and whose first sunrise it was.

How lovely she looked as she felt that!

Meeting his glance, she felt in it a new gentleness, and the feeling brought a deeper flush to her cheek, which stayed there.

'Look at those lovely gentians!' she exclaimed suddenly, as her eyes fell on a purple patch just beneath. She bent down and began to gather them eagerly with both hands. He helped her silently. It was trying work, on the steep uneven ground. Soon Cressida seated herself to rest on a mound of rock crusted over with lichens and mosses.

Any one, watching those two apart, might have seen what they, it appeared, were so slow to see, that the chance which had brought them together at Almenwald was their best friend, and that their best life would begin on the day when they should commit their happiness to each other.

'I never can understand,' began Cressida, 'how the most delicate flowers, with the sweetest scents and the brightest colours, contrive to live in these cold regions and quite happily, as I have heard they do, even to the verge of the snow.'

Mr. Halliday takes a small flower from her basket, and launches into an explanation. 'They accommodate themselves to the circumstances, you see. This little campanula, for instance, in the polar regions has a low stalk; the leaves depend more on the warmth they can draw from the ground than on that of the air. To protect themselves against the cold they have often a velvety

hairy covering, as you see here. They flower very quickly, too. As for the brilliant colours, they are caused by the intensity of the light and the pureness of the air. It seems as if Nature here, having no time to lose, neglected the development of the stalk and the leaves, in order that the flower itself—that the flower, I mean—

‘Well?’ said Cressida, as he stopped, hesitated.

‘What was I saying?’ he asked confusedly.

In truth he had absolutely forgotten what he was talking about, and tried in vain to take up the thread of his discourse.

‘What is the matter?’ she said laughingly. ‘Is that the way you instruct your pupils?’

‘Scarcely,’ he said, laughing too. ‘But then you must remember that I give my lectures mostly between four walls, where there is nothing to distract my pupils’ attention or mine.’

‘But I *was* attending,’ said Cressida seriously, ‘to every word. O, I am not quite so giddy as you think me. I like to learn.’

If any one is in danger of turning giddy this time, it is decidedly Halliday, who, if he has lost the thread of his say, is allowing his eyes to end it in a thoroughly erratic manner.

‘Even from me?’ he asked significantly.

Cressida had half turned away from him. She had let fall her Alpine nosegay; and the campanulas and gentians and grasses lay scattered in a heap on her lap. Impulsively she hid her face for a moment among the flowers, thinking to herself, ‘It is no use; I do, I do like him more than reason—’. Whilst Halliday is feeling that, if he can only have her for himself, he can never be Life’s fool any more, but laugh, if need be, at its prizes and its pains.

The next minute she rose to her feet with a restless, impetuous movement, as if wanting to free herself from a mental weight. But she was careless and hasty, the grass slippery as ice; she lost her footing and would have fallen, had not Halliday opportunely seized her wrist, uttering at the same time an exclamation of the despair of man over the incorrigible rashness and folly of woman. His grasp was like iron, and Cressida recovered her balance immediately.

‘How strong you are!’ she said, laughing.

‘Have I hurt you?’ he asked, relaxing his hold, but still retaining it.

‘No, no,’ she said, smiling. ‘This mountain-slope seems a particularly fatal one for me. If I don’t throw myself down of my own accord, I stumble and fall all the same, you see.’

‘You really want some one to look after you,’ he said; ‘you are so wildly imprudent.’

‘I know I do,’ said Cressida, with penitence; ‘*so* wildly imprudent, that no one in their senses would ever undertake such a troublesome office.’

As she spoke she averted her head; but a wayward expression played around her lips which, if it confirmed her words, helped none the less to scatter the last shadow of after-thought or wise reflection in Halliday’s mind. There was a protective something, both physical and intellectual, in his presence, that was very sweet to Cressida. She let him draw her nearer to him unresistingly.

‘You should allow them to judge of that,’ he said gravely, and with well-marked emphasis.

‘I am not sure,’ she murmured playfully.

Her accent to him was enigmatical. It was Halliday’s pride

that held him back at the instant from a freer and more fervent avowal, which must at that moment have overborne Cressida's self-seeking motives and morbid feelings, and consumed them by fanning into life the one true spark—the possibility in her of that voluntary, unascetic self-devotion that blesses giver and taker alike.

Again, love is so delicate. As with the eye, the most minute intruder, a grain of sand, a particle of dust, is enough to mar all. The faintest, remotest shadow of doubt and distrust was the mote in Halliday's eye just then. It rested with Cressida to remove it if she could. Will she, though?

'The worst *parti* in England, and the most arrant flirt.'

The sentimental gloss of love, to which women are said to cling so fondly, had for Cressida been stripped off betimes. Thoughts she had long ago harboured, thoughts she had fostered these last weeks, came back on her now treacherously to blind her: herself in her earthly wisdom turned against herself in her divine folly.

She had said she would conquer that man's indifference. She had, it seemed. But how? Was he the first who had talked to her and looked at her so? Cressida thought she knew the worth of it exactly.

'I might be half an idiot; it would make no difference to him, so long as I had my mother's eyes. I know he thinks me as corrupt and heartless as Elise. He cares a little for the lips that speak, but nothing for the words spoken.'

And a sentence of her friend Elise's recurred to her as diabolically appropriate in its mockery for the present occasion:

'Girls cannot help it if men look upon them as toys. But it

is their own fault if they give the world for a false sentiment borrowed from their poetry-books and that has found its way into a lover's mouth: "You and I are made for each other;" meaning merely that the toy is pretty, and he would like to have it.'

'Have it, tire of it, despise it openly afterwards,' she concludes to herself.

Halliday meanwhile is waiting for some word—'a want put into a look'—some token, some response. Her impulse is to give it, but she is thinking it down as hard as she can.

'He would sacrifice me to his earthly ambition. And am I to sacrifice all mine to him?'

For Cressida did not hold that 'Love is enough.' Halliday, though himself a living contradiction of the maxim—since his 'enough' included the means of study, and a fair average of success in his work—thought the aphorism a very good one for women to—to act upon, at all events, in certain cases.

But old thoughts, old feelings—bad ones—assert themselves when they are not wanted, and Cressida cannot fling off all at once and at will the long-sighted egotism she has so carefully cultivated. They stand quite silent. Already the short-lived loveliness of the morning is fading—large fleecy clouds have come up behind the mountains, thickening rapidly, and one of them has hidden the sun, taking the colour out of the landscape and breaking the spell.

Voices, at the same moment, are heard on the path above. Cressida suddenly remembers that it is late. Halliday pulls out his watch. They retrace their steps, and go home to breakfast, with the word not spoken yet that should have united their lives henceforth.

Halliday on reflection was not displeased by her hesitation, liked her all the better for her maidenly reluctance. Still, her tantalising manner after that morning both astonished and slightly nettled him. The girl had seemed so impressionable; he had felt—did still—so sure of her preference. Why should she hang back now that he had given her to understand what his feeling was?

He made no secret of his rather mediocre circumstances, but did not see why they should seriously stand in the way. In a year or two he would be in a position to maintain a wife perfectly well; and for the rest a true woman is bound to have faith in her lover's star, foresees him on the eminence he hopes to reach twenty years hence, and is perfectly content to wait and help to support him in the struggle upward.

But Cressida had wilfully let slip a golden moment. Now it is said that Fortune, the one goddess we are all striving to catch, turns a bald head to those to whom she has once presented her locks in front, and who have hesitated and not taken hold.

If Cressida that day on the Alp must force herself to look back and forward, to weigh and to measure, how much more will she do so now, when the exciting crisis is over, when she has leisure to think, and Elise is dropping her piquant poisons into her ear—even more industriously than

usual, for she has become desperately jealous of Mr. Halliday's attentions to her young friend?

Elise had a theory of love that was a compound of Falstaff's estimate of honour and Iago's of reputation. 'Love is an idle and most false imposition; oft got without merit, and lost without deserving. What is love? A word. What is that word, love? Air—'

Should the world be 'well lost' for that? Never.

The thought makes Cressida feel cold and unapproachable.

But, a few days after, the whole episode ends for the present; Elise is carrying her off: 'No match made yet, at all events,' thinks Mrs. de Saumarez.

It is *au revoir*, thinks Halliday when they part; they will meet, no doubt, in England.

Cressida thinks that before that she will put all this out of her head, if she can. But, none the less, it comes that she can never look upon an Alpine flower without a strange sensation, a lightning flash of association unlike anything else in her young experience.

The flowers that grew on the slopes of the Weissberg, and had assisted at the scene, wiser by far than the lovers that trod upon them, how they laughed at those lost children of the century! For the wild gentians and myosotis love was enough.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY.

THERE are scarlet gems in Winter's Crown,
And they shine through the showering snow ;
There are gleams of light from the berries white
Of the shy-leaved mistletoe ;
There is laughter and glee
While the blast blows free,
And the boughs are bare
To the frosty air,
And mirth is merry and mocks despair.

There are glad gay sounds in Winter's voice,
As it rings out the welcome strain :
' Draw near, draw near, for your Christmas cheer,
Now the old King comes again ;'
And let laughter and glee
Alone greet me,
Though my locks are gray
As the short-lived day,
Yet I love and live for the young and gay.'

* * * * *

There are sadder tones in the frosty air,
And a sadder voice to sigh ;
For the dear old King has gone to rest,
And the dear Old Year must die ;
So lay it low in a shroud of snow,
Beneath the midnight sky.

Ring out, glad bells, from far and near ;
Ring over the tossing sea ;
Ring out for the birth of the glad New Year,
So happy a year to be !

O ' day of the Year,' with hopes all bright,
Though the earth be dull and gray,
We welcome you in the pale sweet light
Of the day that has passed away.

Ring out, ring out, from the world apart,
O bells so blithe and gay ;
Your message and you stand heart to heart
As you speak to us all to-day.

Ring out o'er lands that are near and dear,
Or ever so far away,
Till the welcome sound its way has found,
And we echo its joy for aye !

rita.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The Private Secretary.

TACT is to manner what genius is to talent. There are many people in the intellectual world who are clever, erudite, sharp, yet who are utterly destitute of genius; whilst in the social world the number of persons who are ambitious, plausible, and agreeable, and yet totally deficient in tact, is legion. How frequently do we hear questions asked which should be avoided, answers given which should be evaded, and subjects discussed that should never be introduced! How constantly do the scheming and the worldly wise show their hand, and thus mar their game, by a plausibility so palpable that it never deceives! How often is hate defeated by the intensity of its spite and its clumsy malevolence!

If men and women exhibited a little more tact in their walk through life, the snob would talk less of his intimacy with the great, Dives would boast less of his wealth, women would be more careful in their disparagements of each other, the jealous would pretend less to indifference, and the acrid would mingle a little more honey with his gall. We read of an ambition that overvaults itself and falls on the other side. It is quite as possible to fail from overdoing as from never attempting. A well-bred display is one thing, the ostentation of the vulgar another. To know a lord does not necessarily imply an incessant reference to the aristocracy. The possession of wealth is not always evinced

by allusions to the balance at our banker, the extent of our property, and the splendour of our establishment. Familiarity is always silent; it is novelty that is always intrusive.

The man who has been of the gentry for centuries never obtrudes his birth; but the *nouveau riche*, smarting under his social shortcomings, is always climbing up his family tree, and garrulous as to his ancestors. The Volunteer officer is always more military in his ideas than the warrior. The dissenting minister is often far more clerical in his attire than his brother of the Establishment. Whenever we see an over-precision in dress, in language, and in the surroundings of a man or woman, we may be sure that his or her introduction into the ranks of the cultivated is but recent.

As a rule, in that microcosm which we call society, it is easy to estimate the character of a man, or judge the disposition of a woman. But when tact envelops the subject in its subtle folds, criticism becomes more difficult. To detect between the fustian and the purple, the superficial and the solid, the moderate and the wealthy, when tact blinds the observer with its glamour, is an analysis often requiring the greatest social ability. Amongst minerals there are some precious stones which can be imitated so cunningly that even the professed lapidary is often deceived. In wandering through the dazzling alleys of Vanity Fair it is not always at

a glance that we can separate the pearls from the paste. Tact, which is often only another form of imitation, baffles our penetration.

Take the case of Horry Fortescue, for instance. The son of a clergyman of good birth, but slender means, with no commanding talents, with no overpowering attractions as to face or figure, he has yet distanced all his compeers, and is already in possession of much that men envy and women admire. He never trespasses upon the paternal purse—Horry is a charming young man, and remembers that he has sisters—yet he never lacks funds. Though in these days money has ousted birth from the lofty and exclusive position it occupied during the *régime* of the Governing Families, there are still coteries guarded and protected by vigilant outposts, where the knavish capitalist, the vulgar borough member, the prosperous trader never intrude. In these well-winnowed assemblies the name of Horry frequently appears, whilst better and cleverer men are excluded. There are in Horry's set men who have written books, there are glib barristers with an eye to Parliament who make great orations; yet none can draw up a document so clearly and succinctly as he, none at wedding-breakfast or other hospitality can say just what should be said, and no more, better than he. He is surrounded by men who spend hours over their personal adornment, and to whom Nature has granted considerable attractions; yet Horry, who runs up a modest bill with his tailor, and who will dress for dinner in some six minutes, is always considered by ladies to bear away the palm both as to attire and distinction. He is not a scholar, he is not even

!l read; and yet his conversa-

tion is agreeable; whilst the book-worm is silent and the erudite shy. He never makes an enemy; and yet all his friends are drawn from the serviceable class. He is all things to all men, and especially to women, but has the good taste to shun the air of plausibility and familiarity of the popular man of the clubs or the tame cat of the boudoirs. What his vices are we know not, for he keeps them rigidly to himself. His talk is clean and guarded; he respects the *convenances* of life; he shuns the slang of the turf and the betting-room; and without being a prig of the Mechanic's Institute type, or imitating the intense fastidiousness of the educated tradesman, speaks English like a gentleman. Hence in the eyes of the ladies he is deemed 'so nice;' whilst men, in the vernacular they encourage, call him 'good form all round.'

It is now some seven years since Horry Fortescue came to town. After a career successful yet not brilliant at Harrow, he went up to Oxford to complete his education. He had scarcely furnished his rooms at Merton when he was summoned to town, and requested to seat himself at one of the bureaux in the Protocol Department, to which he was appointed by his Grace the Duke of Ambleside, the Lord Keeper of the Department, and who, as the Marquis of Windermere, had been a college friend of the father of young Fortescue. In these days of competitive examinations and Civil Service reorganisation, we need hardly say that the Protocol Department is one of the most envied of the public offices. It is divided, with a simplicity of arrangement which makes the men of the War Office and of Somerset House rage enviously, into two sections: the first section,

with the title of Assistant Keepers of Protocols, begins at three hundred a year, rising by thirty-five pound stages to six hundred; whilst the second section, with the rank of Keepers of Protocols, pays its officials from seven hundred to nine hundred a year. There are also various staff appointments, ranging from a thousand to fifteen hundred a year, which are given in the Department or not, according to the interest of the applicant inside, or the claims of hungry place-hunters outside.

The Protocol Department has this advantage over its fellows, that its candidates are appointed direct by the Lord Keeper, and have to endure no ordeal at the hands of the Civil Service examiners. It is one of the maxims of the Department that education is all very well, still, where simple yet responsible duties are to be performed, to be what is termed a 'gentleman' is of far more importance. The Lord Keeper is always a peer of high degree, and the aristocratic mind shudders at the thought of seeing some young scion of the vulgar, whose only recommendation would be brains and a baptismal certificate, copying protocols or conventions at one of the comfortable oak bureaux of the Department, only perhaps to sell his information to the first newspaper which would bid for his services. We need hardly say that honour and honesty are exclusively confined to those born in the purple. The turf frauds, the card scandals, the City Company swindles, and the divorce revelations of a recent date, have arisen, as we all know, entirely within the ranks of the plebeian. At least, such is the opinion of the Lord Keepers of Protocols from time immemorial. No son of the people, no hard-

working Irish student, none of the geniuses from Glasgow and Aberdeen have ever yet entered the swinging dark-mahogany doors of the Department. The officials are all men with some claims to ancestry, their fathers standing well in the front of the landed gentry, their elder brothers in the Guards or at embassies; a few of them bear titles of courtesy; also one or two have the shadow of the bar sinister across their escutcheon. A well-bred fashionable coterie is the Protocol Department, and such it is likely to remain until the seldom quoted New Zealander shall come to take a photograph of its ruins from the Thames Embankment.

Into this snug berth Horace Fortescue was ensconced. The young man well knew that little from the paternal estate could fall to his share, and that he would have to be dependent upon his own energies for his advancement in life. He worked hard, he was punctual in his attendance, and the result of his labours could generally be relied upon. There are those who imagine that the industry displayed in a Government office chiefly consists in reading the morning papers, receiving visits from friends, lounging from one room to the other, partaking of elaborate luncheons, and perhaps copying a letter or adding up a total, supported by the stimulant of a cigarette or a cigar. No greater delusion exists. As a rule, the Civil servants of the Crown are as industrious and as hard worked as any other community; and considering the poverty of their pay and of their prospects, it speaks somewhat to their sense of honour that official treachery is unknown in their midst. What banker, merchant, or solicitor would intrust his clerks with the secrets that are

often among the daily duties of a member of the Civil Service?

As in all other departments, there were men in the Protocol Office who came late and went away early, who idled their time, and who, whenever a diligent colleague was promoted, cursed their ill-luck, but never found fault with their industry. The keen calculating glance of Horry Fortescue soon saw through his brother officials, and soon distinguished the men who were to be his rivals from those from whom he had nothing to fear. His tact, his genial ways, his innate good taste, stood him in good stead during the struggle. The idlers knew he worked, but did not call him 'a smug'; the industrious saw they had a dangerous foe, but did not dislike him; on the contrary, they rather liked him. Gradually Horry began to obtain a reputation in the Department. The Keepers complimented him; the assistant-secretaries asked him to dinner; there was some talk of sending him abroad, attached to a commission to inspect boundaries.

But the goal upon which the ambition of Horry was firmly set was still as far removed as ever. He wanted to know his Grace of Ambleside. On his appointment he had been introduced to the Duke, who had hoped his father was well, said that he thought the morning was cold for the time of the year, trusted there would soon be a change in the weather, and—that was all. The old rector had asked a few great people he knew in town to be civil to his son, and Horry had exerted all his manoeuvres to come across the consort of his Chief. But in vain. Her Grace was a volatile, impulsive, and somewhat stupid woman, who gave herself great airs, snubbed people or took them up, according

to her fickle fancy, accepted invitations, and then at the last moment declined them, so that no dependence could be placed upon her word or her movements. Three times had Horry been asked to a crush in order to meet the Duchess, and it had pleased her Grace precisely at those three times not to put in an appearance. 'It all depends upon how she likes you at first,' said his fair friends; 'sometimes she likes certain young men for one thing, and at other times hates them for exactly the same thing. It is all a chance.' But Horry knew perfectly well that where his own interests were concerned it would become a very difficult job for any one to hate him. Only let him have five minutes with the Duchess, and he would not fear the consequences.

As luck would have it, one night he met her Grace at a 'small and early' calico dance, to which she had not been invited, but to which she thought she should like to go. He was introduced, and had the honour of dancing with the youngest daughter of the illustrious house. There was to be a cotillon. Everybody was talking about the one that had been got up the night before at the house of the Duchess y Pommeros y Grenos y Giesleroso. No one could remember the figures. Her Grace of Ambleside was most anxious to see that cotillon reproduced. There was a Tarantella in it: Maud could do the Tarantella—no one could do a Tarantella like Maud; she must see it; at all events try. Fortunately Horry had been at the Spanish Embassy. He suggested a few figures; the cotillon was got up; Maud danced the Tarantella. The Duchess was delighted. She thought Mr. Fortescue the most charming young man

she had ever seen. Horry was asked to Kendal House.

It is said that every man has his opportunity once in a lifetime, which, if taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. The friendship of the Duchess of Ambleside was the opportunity of Horry Fortescue, and he cleverly availed himself of it. He suggested the blue and silver which was to furnish her Grace's boudoir; he designed, thanks to an artistic friend in his office, a series of *menu* cards of the most novel and elaborate description for her Grace's table; he bought her a gray parrot which could talk like an Irish Obstructive; his services were invaluable at picnics, garden-parties, and at lawn-tennis; he recommended works of devotion to the eldest daughter, gave sporting 'tips' to the second, and supported the third, who was in her teens, when she skated at Prince's. From 'such a charming young man' he soon developed into 'that dear Horry Fortescue.'

At the end of the season he was asked down to Ullsthwaite Castle for the shooting. He now schemed for his reward. There was a talk in the Department that Sefton Fitzgerald, the Duke's private secretary, was to become one of the Commissioners of Abbey Lands. Horry was most desirous of succeeding him. He begged the Duchess to use her good offices; and as her Grace had no poor cousin or tutor she wished to provide for, she readily consented to become his friend. The result was that at the end of a few weeks there appeared the following paragraph in the morning papers:

'We hear that Mr. Sefton Fitzgerald, of the Protocol Department, has been appointed to the vacant Commissionership of Abbey Lands. Mr. Fortescue, of the same department, will succeed Mr.

Fitzgerald as private secretary to the Duke of Ambleside.'

Anyone acquainted with official life is well aware that to be private secretary to a Cabinet Minister is one of the prizes in the Civil Service. Not only is the lucky recipient freed from the ordinary duties of his department, but he stands an excellent chance of being appointed to any of the staff posts that may fall vacant—Commissionerships, Comptrollerships, Assistant-secretaryships, and the like. It is true that Horry has placed his foot on the first rung of the ladder of the State, but he has no intention of being content with his position. His keen calculating eye looks beyond, and he sees no obstacle to prevent him from attaining further successes. Already he enjoys the reputation of being a model private secretary. Search the Government service through, and there is not a man in it who knows how to receive a deputation with more urbanity or dismiss it with greater platitudes than Horry Fortescue. To see him get rid of an Irishman who thinks he has a claim upon the Government is a marvel of tact, firmness, and diplomacy. At a glance he can distinguish the men whom he should introduce to his Chief from those he is able to deal with himself. The letters he writes are so terse and yet so courteous; no one has a happier knack than he of refusing without offence or accepting without responsibility.

Seated in his spacious room overlooking St. James's Park, with its rich mahogany furniture and imposing silver candlesticks, well dressed—never does he don that indescribable garment called an 'office-coat'—courteous, agreeable, dignified without *haut-
teur*, and easy without familiarity, he appears to the political visitor

as a very fitting representative of the aristocratic traditions of the Protocol Department. The Duke is charmed with him, and vows that he never had a secretary who was so useful, and whose information can be so fully relied upon. As his Grace leans on the arm of Horry whilst walking down to the House of Lords on a fine afternoon, the friends of the young man who knew him at Harrow or Oxford—friends briefless in their chambers or poring over ledgers in their fathers' counting-houses, or who curse 'the service'—look at him enviously, and mutter to themselves, 'What luck some men have!'

It is true that Horry is a lucky man—the element of luck enters more into the affairs of life than philosophers suppose—but his post is no sinecure. There are few men in town more hard worked all the year round than our private secretary. He is daily at the office at eleven; he has to read and reply to all the letters the Duke receives, from an important state paper to an application for an appointment from some one who stayed at the same hotel at Hom-burg with his Grace and gave him the address of a doctor; he receives visitors; he attends upon deputations; he has to hunt up references for the Duke's speeches, and furnish him with all departmental facts when the office is inquired into by the House; after the office is closed he has to attend upon his Chief at the House of Lords; when the Protocol Department is attacked by the Opposition he knows no rest either day or night, examining correspondence, wading through Blue-books, verifying references, and the like; whilst at the same time he has to put in an appearance at all great social entertainments, accompany the Duke to public dinners, and out of the session to

coach up his Grace in the current topics of the day, and find him material for speech-making. In short, Horry is amanuensis, aide-de-camp, public servant, literary man, official devil, man of fashion, and confidential correspondent all rolled into one.

It is my good fortune to be a member of the Caravanserai, a club which also boasts of Horry as one of its *habitués*. I am an elderly gentleman and what Horace—the poet, not the private secretary—calls *justa chiragra*, or in other words gout afflicts considerably my extremities. Consequently I am somewhat peevish and irritable; and as my dinner chiefly consists of a basin of mutton-broth and a bottle of Apollinaris, I am aware that my company does not much add to the gaieties of the table. But it is always a pleasure for me to meet young Fortescue. He is so very different from many of the *jeunesse dorée* of the present day, who are often only so many walking advertisements of their tailor, hatter, perfumer, and jeweller. He does not part his hair in the middle, or wear white gaiters, or swagger in his walk, or tilt his hat on one side, or cover his white well-shaped fingers with massive rings. He comes of a good stock, and has none of the pretence and self-assertion of the would-be gentry.

Whenever he dines at the club I try to secure the table next him. Living, as he does, among the great, he knows everything that is going on, and he imparts such information as he feels inclined to give with none of the mystery and importance of the fifth-rate man of fashion, but simply and naturally. He tells me what young women are going to the altar, and what young men are going to the dogs; what novices are going to Court, and what

fast men are going through it; he knows the latest good stories in circulation; he explains to my untutored mind the mysterious paragraphs in the newspapers relating to meditated divorces, turf frauds, and card scandals; his conversation is always amusing and, when he chooses, often instructive. Like most men who work hard, he is something of a *gourmet*, and it does my impaired digestion good to see him discuss his dainty little dishes and moisten his throat with the best club vintages.

But, unfortunately for me, Horry is very seldom at the Caravanserai. He belongs to the Blenheim and the Coterie, and the fascinations of those two superior establishments interfere greatly with the modest charms of my club. Then his official duties and crowd of invitations are formidable obstacles to the ordinary routine of club life. Horry is a young man of whom the French say 'he will arrive;' and he knows perfectly well that by selfishly dining at the club, and afterwards playing whist till three in the morning, is not the course for him to adopt. He looks upon society as a woman does, not as a form of dissipation, but as a profession. Cautious, calculating, self-seeking, good-

tempered, good-looking, amusing, he takes stock of his advantages, and resolves to lay them out at interest. He knows the fortunes of all the widows of his acquaintance, and can be frequently seen bending over the bulky volumes at the Probate Office—of course always for a friend. Perfectly aware that he is a 'detrimental,' and not an 'eligible,' he never attempts to enlist the affections of the few heiresses that cross his path, and consequently is highly thought of by prudent mothers. But a widow! one who has been united to a wealthy elderly man, who has twined her young and guileless heart around his sex-generian sympathies like ivy round a ruin, and who has inherited all his fortune, and been hated accordingly by all his relations! I can fancy Horry's graceful figure, his manly yet winning manners, his deep-blue eyes, and silky chestnut beard, not entering the lists in vain in such a quarter. Horry's future is certain. He will marry money, he will enter the House, he will make a name for himself, and the time will assuredly come when, holding some good subordinate post—an Under-Secretaryship of State, a Junior Lordship, a Vice-Presidentship—he will himself command the services of a Private Secretary.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER I.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT MYSELF—MY CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

I EXPERIENCE some embarrassment in beginning this tale. In conformity with ordinary usage I must introduce myself to the reader, talk about myself, say a word or two about my appearance and my character. Now in talking about yourself it is very difficult to maintain a happy medium. If you assume an air of modesty, you are supposed to be fishing for compliments; but if you go to the other extreme, you are set down as foppish, vain, and presumptuous, which is still worse. To avoid this double danger, I have decided on a course which I think will please everybody. I shall describe neither my figure nor my features. Sensible folks who write their memoirs, their travels, or their adventures, are in the habit of giving their portraits, a plan I have adopted above.

In the first place, and as is only natural, a reader likes to be familiar with the features of an author who, in a more or less considerable number of pages, is to confide to him his feelings of dread or of enthusiasm—in a word, all the emotions of his soul. For instance, when your author says, 'I was amazed,' 'I was struck dumb with terror,' 'I was convulsed with laughter,' or uses other similar expressions, it is pleasant to be able to imagine the changes successively produced in his features by amazement, terror, or wild mirth. To own the truth, I have a pretty good opinion of my personal appearance; but for all that, I assure you I give you my portrait for the reasons already stated, not from any silly feeling of vanity. This matter settled, I beg leave to relate as briefly as



the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million (1990-1999) (Department of Health 2000).

There is a growing emphasis on the importance of the public sector in the provision of health care services, and the need to ensure that the public sector is able to meet the needs of the population. This has led to a number of initiatives aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector, including the introduction of the Health Service Act 1999 and the Health Service Act 2001.

The Health Service Act 1999 introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is run, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board and the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales.

The Health Service Act 2001 introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is run, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is funded, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is managed, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is monitored, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is evaluated, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is improved, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is supported, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

The Health Service Act 2001 also introduced a number of changes to the way in which the public sector is regulated, including the introduction of the Health Service Commissioning Board for Wales and the Health Service Commissioning Board for England.

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THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

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The thirtieth was the...
The thirty-first was the...
The thirty-second was the...
The thirty-third was the...
The thirty-fourth was the...
The thirty-fifth was the...
The thirty-sixth was the...
The thirty-seventh was the...
The thirty-eighth was the...
The thirty-ninth was the...
The fortieth was the...
The forty-first was the...
The forty-second was the...
The forty-third was the...
The forty-fourth was the...
The forty-fifth was the...
The forty-sixth was the...
The forty-seventh was the...
The forty-eighth was the...
The forty-ninth was the...
The fiftieth was the...

possible the story of my childhood and the causes which led to my adventures.

I never knew my parents. This is the case with almost all insects. When we are born our parents are already dead, and have sometimes been dead a long time, so that the expression 'spoiled child' could never be used in connection with any of us. You must not therefore jump to the conclusion that our parents launch us into life without caring what becomes of us. O, no; very far from that. Few have any idea how great is the solicitude of parents for their offspring in our world, or what self-denial, what devotion, is met with in every stage of our existence.

My earliest recollections go back a long way. I did not become suddenly conscious of life, and my notions on the delicate question of my origin are very confused. Ransacking the depths of my memory to the utmost, I dimly recall the following facts.

I found myself shut up in a very cramped position in a kind of oblong box, with my limbs folded up and pressed against my body. How long I had been in this strange situation, how I got there, and why I was there, were all equally incomprehensible to me. The wish to make myself more comfortable led me to try and turn round, and the result of this effort was that my box split from top to bottom. The first moment of surprise over, I ventured to push one foot through the newly-made opening, then a second, then a third. The opening became wider. Growing bolder by degrees, I put out my head, and at last my whole body was free.

I now found myself in a kind of tiny vault only lighted by a narrow crack in the ceiling. Instinctively I longed to reach the

luminous point, and I endeavoured by fresh exertions to enlarge the opening through which the light reached me. It was a long and painful task, which resulted, however, in complete success. I reached the surface of the ground. When the rays of the sun first fell on me I was very much dazzled and also inexpressibly delighted. After stretching my limbs one after the other, I looked around. The view was very extensive. A kind of escarpment of earth enclosed a small space, where crowds of little creatures like myself were moving about. These young crickets made up my family; they were my brothers and sisters, who, like myself, had just come out of the egg.

We were born in a kind of shallow excavation surrounded by a perpendicular escarpment, probably the result of the pressure of a stone which had formerly rested there. Each of us had scooped out a little grotto for himself in the escarpment, and the flat central square served as a general meeting-place. The desire to extend our field of action, however, soon led us to pierce a passage, by means of which we could go beyond the bounds of our common home, and sometimes alone or in small parties we went for walks or indulged in a little music in the open air.

One evening—it was in the month of May—tempted by the mildness of the atmosphere, we left our residence in a body. The moon was shining brightly, the air was laden with the most exquisite scents, and a thin bluish vapour rising from the ground gave a matchless harmony of tone to all surrounding objects. We were vividly conscious of the joy of mere existence.

Above us a nightingale was warbling his most joyful melodies.

His shakes, now tender, now impassioned, thrilled me through and through. My brothers and sisters gave themselves up to happy frolics. As for me, my emotion choked me. I withdrew a little

distance to be out of the noise. I tried to bring myself into harmony with the inspired songster, whose music had so intoxicated me. How elevated, how pure, how ethereal, how refined I



thought must be the feelings of that charming creature! How fortunate he was to be able to express them in such notes! Would that I had wings on which to soar to him and tell him of the enthusiasm he had aroused in me!

He ceased singing suddenly. I

looked up to ascertain the cause of his silence, and at that moment a mass of earth, which knocked me down and nearly buried me alive, was flung in my face. My head alone escaped, and what did I see? A terrible sight, which still haunts me when I cannot

sleep at night. The heavenly creature, whom I had been worshipping a minute before, had hopped into the midst of my brothers and sisters, and was massacring them wholesale. The survivors of my unhappy family, shuddering with terror, were eager to get back to our colony, but the entrance of the passage was too narrow to admit of all rushing into it at once. My brothers availed themselves of their superior strength to get in before my sisters, whom they pushed back roughly. What cruel egotists fear makes of us all! My poor sisters! I seem to see them still pleading for pity, now from their brothers, now from the hateful nightingale! Very few escaped from the massacre. As for me, the earth which covered me hid me from the horrid murderer. It was that which saved me. A little later I got back to our home, now a scene of the utmost desolation. There remained but eight of my sisters and twenty-two of my brothers. I refrained from reproaching the latter in any way. Their crime was the result of the instinct of self-preservation. Perhaps if I had been amongst them at that awful moment I should have done as they did. Moreover, their manner clearly proved that their consciences severely pricked them.

I reflected much upon this incident, and realised that henceforth I must mistrust my first impressions; that I must sometimes examine my feelings, and never allow myself to be carried away by irrational enthusiasm. I now knew that the most charming and attractive creatures are sometimes the most treacherous and the most to be avoided. Later observations in the course of my adventurous life ratified this first opinion.

Another thing of a totally dif-

ferent character greatly influenced my fate. A little later signs of discord began to disturb our family relations. Discussions, which used to end amicably, now took a different turn. They often became acrimonious, and several times I had to interfere to prevent a fight. I must explain that we had grown older. We were completely transformed, alike physically and mentally, and, without disguise, I must own that our bodies were more improved than our minds. A new feeling, hitherto unknown, had taken the place of the affection which formerly animated us. The exacting passion of jealousy, the mother of so much evil, gradually acquired sway over the minds of my brothers. It soon became impossible for us to live together. We separated, and each went his own way, to scoop out a private residence for himself. Our birthplace was a meadow, sloping gently to the south. A few scattered trees—walnut I think they were—cast a little shade here and there, leaving the rest of the field exposed to the heat of the sun. The shady places were much sought after by us crickets. I settled down beneath the shelter of a large stone, which protruded from the ground, and from the summit of which I could enjoy the beautiful view it commanded, without venturing far from home. I lived a very lonely life. I forgot to mention that, after the catastrophe related above, my brothers fought rather shy of me, evidently feeling somewhat embarrassed in my society. They were aware that I had witnessed their unworthy conduct in the melancholy emergency. I had never reproached them; we had never talked the matter over together, or, indeed, made the very slightest allusion to it; yet their feeling against me gradually be-

came positive aversion, and what especially grieved me was that my sisters were at last won over to regarding me in the same manner. One day, on some trivial pretext, one of my brothers picked a quarrel with me, and suddenly, when I least expected it, flung himself upon me with the greatest fury. I was obliged to defend myself, and in this fratricidal struggle I was unlucky enough to inflict a mortal injury.

I was literally overwhelmed with horror. No one had wit-

nessed the involuntary murder, yet my brothers did not hesitate to charge me with it. I could only conclude that the attack on me had been preconcerted amongst them. The event, however, had disappointed their guilty wishes. A fresh but better planned attempt of the same kind might be made at any moment, and I therefore at once decided to leave a spot where my life was in constant danger.

This resolution once made there was no motive for putting off its



execution ; on the contrary, there was every reason for losing no time about it. I waited, however, until sunset to start, and once more I climbed up on to my stone to look for the last time from my favourite observatory on all the objects which had become familiar to me, and to bid them farewell for ever. On this occasion my voice was silenced, and my usual joyful songs were replaced by suppressed sighs. Long did I gaze upon the old trees dotting the meadow, the winding path leading across it, the silvery waters of the meandering river at the bottom of the valley, the dis-

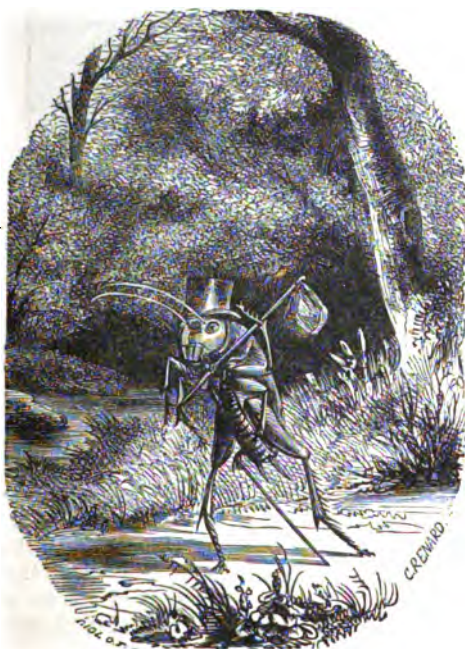
tant town, and the rows of poplars with their leaves gently rustling in the evening breeze. Farewell, landscape familiar to my childhood ; I look upon thee for the last time ! As I came down again I reflected how unconsciously we attach ourselves to the things about us, and how dear the most ordinary objects become to us when we have to leave them.

Would you believe it ? I now felt some emotion in looking at a sturdy burdock growing behind my house. I knew every leaf ; I had seen each one gradually unfold itself ; the very bees which

came to hover over the flowers were familiar to me. One day a cassida (beetle) had established herself on one of the leaves, and had begun to feed on it. At first I felt angry, for this seemed to me a kind of desecration of my favourite plant; but reflection convinced me of my injustice, and I ended by making a friend of my neighbour. She listened to my songs of her own free will, and flattered by this homage to my musical talents I conquered the repugnance with which her slovenly habits at first inspired me. Of course you know that the grubs of some beetles are in the habit of covering themselves with their own excrement. Once, at the beginning of our acquaintance, I had applied an injurious epithet to this custom. My neighbour was not at all offended, but gently told me that she could quite understand the aversion she inspired, that she was ashamed of its cause; but that the dirtiness

with which I reproached her was not the result of depraved taste or even of carelessness, but of necessity. All the members of her family, she added, living as they do in exposed situations on leaves, are compelled to resort to some such means to protect themselves from the voracity of birds; that what excited my disgust had a similar effect on those terrible enemies; and that after all it was well worth while to put up with some little inconveniences for the sake of preserving life. I admitted the justice of these arguments, and, as I have said, we struck up quite a warm friendship. A little before the time of which I am now writing my cassida underwent her metamorphosis—her wings were grown, and she took flight.

Whilst I was indulging in these reflections the day had gradually faded into twilight. I roused myself from my reverie, and without one backward glance I left the home of my childhood.



CHAPTER II.

EARLY ADVENTURES, AND WHAT SUCCEEDED THEM.

It was now the end of July. The day had been hot, and the evening, instead of being cooler, was even more sultry. Brilliant flashes of lightning and the roll of distant thunder now and then gave warning of an approaching storm. The path I was following wound through the grass of the meadow. Nocturnal prowlers, such as *amarus*, *harpalus*, and *staphylinus* beetles, in search of their prey, now alone, now in parties of two or three, were beginning to come out. I was not at all afraid of them, for I was provided with a pair of jaws formidable enough to inspire respect. Of course I was not afraid. Still I felt a little excited and nervous.

Was it the thunder in the air, or was it because it was something new for me to be wandering about at this time of night? I don't know how it was, but the slightest noise made me tremble. Even the noisy flight of a dung-beetle constantly passing backwards and forwards above my head ruffled my nerves.

I was walking rapidly on,

without any very definite goal in view, trusting to chance for finding shelter for the night, when one of my hind legs suddenly sank into the ground, and I felt it seized and held in the claws of some subterranean creature invisible to me. I shuddered convulsively; then straining every limb I bounded forward, and fell down in a little path

branching off from the one I was following.

As ill-luck would have it, I alighted on the back of a beetle which was just running along this cross-road. It was a beautiful golden carabus, a proud and brilliant coleopteron, who was probably bound for some important rendezvous.

The shock

knocked him down, and he rolled over two or three times.

'Stupid creature!' he exclaimed, as he got up. 'Can't you look where you're going?'

Now, although this was not a very polite speech, I was going to apologise, feeling that I was the aggressor, when turning a little away from me he squirted some caustic and horribly noisome



liquid all over me, which got into my eyes and made them smart dreadfully.

'Wretch!' I cried. 'Abominable scoundrel! Do you call this manners? Wait a bit and I'll

make you repent of your insolence, despicable insect that you are!'

But making some sneering retort which I did not understand, he went off, leaving me mortified, crestfallen, and half suffocated



with the poisonous smell of the stuff he had poured over me. To roll myself in the dust and rub myself vigorously against the stems of the grass was the work of an instant, and I succeeded in getting rid of some of the noisome stuff, though it still clung to my

joints. I wanted to wash myself thoroughly, but where was I to find water? The storm might not burst for some time. Presently I spied rather a tall piece of stubble a little distance off. With some difficulty I climbed up it, and once at the top I looked

round, trying to find some little pool where I could bathe. I was successful; for in the distance, in the very path I had been following, I made out with the aid of the lightning a little puddle of water left by the last shower at the bottom of a rut. Coming down from my elevated position, and resuming the path I had left, I walked rapidly towards this natural bath. I was close to it when I saw a party of grasshoppers, which seemed very merry; and as soon as they caught sight of me hurried towards me, laughing and jumping, evidently with the intention of teasing me. I should have liked to hide myself, but there was no time; and I was still hesitating what to do, when I was surrounded by the graceful creatures.

Alas, what I expected came soon enough! As soon as I was hemmed in on every side by their wild circle they stopped abruptly, and glanced disdainfully at poor wretched me, whilst one of them cried, 'Fie! how horrible!' On that all the others hopped away roaring with laughter, and shouting out anything but flattering epithets. Left alone, and feeling more abashed than words can express, I hastened to the puddle and plunged into it.

I was soon clean again, and whilst I was washing I saw a magnificent violet beetle pass along the path above me. He did not notice me, and I took care not to attract his attention. I could not help admiring his elegance and the easy grace with which he ran.

'A plague on you and all like you!' I muttered between my teeth. 'Who would guess from your dainty airs that you carried such horrible scents about you? Appearances are very deceitful.'

I was going on with my interrupted task, chuckling over my

own wit, when I again heard the grasshoppers shouting and laughing merrily; but suddenly the sounds changed into shrill screams and angry yells.

'Ah,' I said to myself, 'the chatterboxes have just found to their cost what it is to offend an ill-mannered fellow of the beetle tribe. My coleopteron has been up to his pranks.'

On the whole I was not sorry that the ill-natured remarks of which I had been the object had been soon avenged. I made haste to leave my bath, and went off as fast as I could; for I guessed that the troop of grasshoppers would soon come to plunge into the puddle for the very same reasons that had actuated me.

My path now led into a wide road bounded on either side by a bank surmounted by a hedge. On the left, this road was lost in a pine-wood; on the right, it led to a gate giving access to a garden, which appeared to me of vast extent. At the farther end, and a good distance off, I could see the roof and weathercocks of a house of considerable size rising above shrubs of every variety. All these observations I made by means of the brilliant and constant flashes of lightning.

Should I turn to the left or to the right? Should I scale the bank opposite to me? It did not matter to me which way I went; for, as you know, I had no settled purpose. It was therefore the more necessary for me to find some corner in which to pass the night where I should be sheltered from the rain which seemed to be threatening. The sight of a jackdaw flying about in the pine-wood made me decide to turn in the other direction. I had no desire to serve for his supper.

I soon reached the gate of the garden, and was just going through

it when I met a hedgehog going in the opposite direction. Fortunately his attention was at the moment distracted by the barking of a dog a little distance off, and he did not see me. The roads were certainly not safe at this time of night, and I really must make haste and conceal myself if I did not wish to fall a victim to some hungry prowler. Thus far my adventures had been only disagreeable; but if I did not look out, they might soon become tragic.

Whilst reflecting thus, I had been advancing along the garden-path mentioned above. On the left glistened the waters of a pond; on the right were sloping strawberry-beds stocked with luxuriant plants. I left the middle of the path, where I was too conspicuous, and went near the edge, so that I could easily conceal myself under a leaf if any fresh danger should menace me. It was a good thing I did. I had scarcely turned to the right when the ground seemed to tremble beneath me,



whilst a terrible noise rapidly increased. It was a carriage drawn by a pair of horses in full trot. I sprang into a strawberry-plant, and was congratulating myself on my prudence in having left the middle of the path, when a fresh incident made me shudder with terror.

I was rolling myself up under a large leaf, determined to remain there until the morning, when I felt a heavy paw laid upon my shoulder. At this unexpected touch I turned round trembling with fear and thinking that my last hour was come. My sudden

movement made the creature which had caused it burst out laughing.

'Why, cousin,' it cried, 'it strikes me I've frightened you finely! But come now, is it proper for a cricket to be running about out of doors at this time of night? Where do you spring from?'

This merry greeting reassured me at once. He, or rather she, who addressed me was a mole-cricket, the entrance to whose home was under the very leaf where I had taken refuge. She was standing on her threshold, but the darkness and the agitation

into which the passing of the carriage had thrown me had prevented my seeing her. You know that mole crickets are our near relations; they are very much like us, only they always wear brown, and their habit of constantly digging in the ground in search of the larvæ of different kinds, on which they feed, has made their forepaws of a disproportionate size. It was one of those huge paws set down upon me which had so terrified me just before.

'Well,' I replied, laughing, 'I own I was a little startled, but fancy yourself in my place. I thought I was alone; and besides, I am a little nervous and excitable.'

'I see you are, dear cousin, I see you are; but you know when folks are nervous they stay quietly at home at night, they don't go roving about at unseasonable hours. I should have thought you would have been more discreet.'

'O cousin!' I exclaimed, colouring a little, 'how you do talk! If you knew what has happened to me, you would pity me instead of making fun of me.'

'Well, you can tell me all about it. But you had better come in with me; we can talk more privately then, and we shall be out of the rain, which is beginning.'

'But, cousin, I scarcely like to, people are so spiteful; I am afraid.'

'Ah, ah, ah!' she answered; 'lay aside your scruples, poor

child; don't you see that I am old enough to be your grandmother?'

As she spoke she went in; and I followed her, thinking over this strange adventure. My innate delicacy had been more than once wounded by my cousin's excessive familiarity with a relative she now met for the first time. Some of the expressions she used betrayed a certain want of culture; but I excused her on account of her age, and of the heartiness of her welcome. She was evidently one of those good creatures with whom one could be quite at home; she wore her heart on her sleeve, as the saying goes; and besides, her proffered hospitality came in the nick of time.

We went along a very narrow passage, which was so dark that I had to grope my way.

'Don't be afraid to come straight on, dear cousin—the path is quite even. And here we are in my dining-room; you see my quarters are pretty comfortable.'

'I assure you, dear cousin, that I see absolutely nothing; my eyes are wide open, but it is so very dark here that I can make out nothing.'

'Of course it is; I forgot that. My home is so familiar to me that I don't need to see to find my way about it, but it's different for you. What shall we do? O, I know; rest a bit; I'll be back in a minute.'

(To be continued.)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER I. AWAY TO THE MOUNTAINS !

'FATHER, is there any land where there are no mountains?' Thus spoke little Walter Tell, as he and his father stood together in the market-place of Altdorf; nor could he have chosen any more appropriate spot for the question. For, on reaching Altdorf, the traveller enters immediately upon the most rugged and mountainous part of the canton of Uri; where the snow-crowned heads of the Overalpstock, Spitzliberg, Galenstock, and Urathhörner, some of the mightiest giants of the range, look down into the valleys below, and whence the whole of the rest of the world seems to be shut out by Titanic fortifications which kiss the clouds. The idea of a plain is one which it has never entered into the mind of the mountain shepherd-boy to conceive; and a world without mountains is to him no world at all, or, at best, but a Wonder-world—a sort of Fairyland, which his fancy peoples with beings of quite a different race from those whom he sees boldly climbing the steep cliffs in pursuit of game, or ascending the Alps in attendance on their cattle.

'Father, is there any land where there are no mountains?'

And the father's answer runs as follows :

'Descending from these lofty heights of
ours,
Lower and lower, following the streams,
We reach at length a wide and open
plain,
Where wood-born torrents cease to rush
and foam,
And gliding rivers run a placid course :
There you may gaze to north, south,
east, and west,
And still find nothing to obstruct your
view.'

SCHILLER'S *Wilhelm Tell*, act iii. sc. 8.

An answer which points us to the low-lying plain of Lombardy, or leads us, by way of the lovely Alp-born Rhine, down into the flat country on the shores of the North Sea, the plain of North Germany, where another child, as he wanders along with his hand in his father's, puts the eager question, 'Father, what is a mountain like? Do tell me !'

If the father has no poetic answer ready, he strives to give the little catechist some idea of a mountain by pointing to the short stumpy tower of the nearest church, and telling him to imagine two, three, ten, a hundred such towers piled one upon the other, until the head of the topmost one is lost altogether in the drifting clouds. He contrives, in this way, to build up a curious sort of mountain; but the boy turns giddy at the thought of it, and as he gazes with staring eyes at the imaginary height, he thinks within himself that it is far better to live in the plain where there are no stones to trip one up.

The lowlander is perfectly satisfied all his life with his interminable plains, over which the eye wanders freely, with nothing to break the calm monotony of the view; but the mountaineer loves his bold mountains, and he speedily grows home-sick and feels oppressed and out of spirits when he is compelled to leave them for the plain country, even though the latter be 'a very garden to look at.'

'Make way for liberty!' was the cry, even in the Middle Ages; and it came from the lips of a man courageous unto the death,

who thought not of wife or child, nor all that he held most dear, as he pressed to his noble heart the lances uplifted against his country by her foes. 'Make way for liberty, and give liberty an asylum!' was once the cry of our own age; and then the best and noblest of every nation, who were persecuted at home and driven from their families, found a home and refuge at the hospitable hearth of the Switzer. Here, safely intrenched behind the mountains, they breathed such air as kings could not stomach, and sang in ecstasy to the heights around:

'In mute yet speaking glory
God's wonders here have shone!
To misery thou hast brought me,
Old Pedlar, now begone!'

But in the course of a decade the fame of Switzerland's beauty had penetrated far and wide, and was proclaimed aloud by enthusiastic poets and painters.

In thousands, in hundreds of thousands, and from every quarter of the inhabited world, from every island, and from the other side of the ocean, they came, the confiding youths! And they found what they sought for—a land teeming with natural beauty of all sorts, in richest abundance and most glorious variety; a land where strength and sweetness are combined in a way not to be found elsewhere. Thus, for many a year past, Switzerland has been the Mecca of all lovers of Nature, and will become so more and more, as long as the lakes sparkle and the meadows are green, and the everlasting mountains rear their snow-white heads to the clouds. Those who have never been there long and struggle to go; but whoever has once breathed the air of the mountains thenceforward feels his heart swell with home-sickness, and will return again and again to sojourn

by the still waters or ascend the majestic heights, where the heart is invigorated as well as cheered and refreshed by the pure charms and pleasures of Nature. When the hard dreary winter has come to an end, as soon as ever the last dirty snow has melted in the streets of the gloomy northern city, and the first primrose has been seen in the meadows without the gates, and the cherry-tree has put forth its first blossoms, then the invalid begins to breathe more freely. He hopes that the awakening zephyrs will bring some change to him as well as to the rest of the world; and then suddenly all the newspapers seem to speak words of comfort and encouragement to him as they mention the names of all the beautiful places in Switzerland which begin to put forth their attractions with the first spring birds. In the course of the new year now begun he hopes that the use of their baths, the drinking of their medicinal waters, and the breathing of their pure air will help him to regain his health. His eye will probably fall first on Ragatz and Pfäfers, lovely places stationed beside the rushing Tamina, and fully worthy of the praise so freely bestowed on them. He may choose between St. Moritz, a verdant and charming lake-idyl in the Engadine, and Tarasp-Schuls, the pearl of the river Inn, which lies magnificently set between Alveneu and Leuk. Breaths of delicious air, bringing promises of restored health, seem to be wafted to him from far-away Samaden, Davos, Klosters, Bellaggio, and Lugano. Or if he does not wish to go so far there are baths in pleasant proximity, which were famous even in the time of the old Romans, such as Riedbad, which overflows with sociable gaiety, and Weissenburg,

and the baths on the beautiful there is no place which surpasses
Lake Constance. But after all the old Rigi; and the difficulty is



SHEPHERD OF THE MEGLIS-ALP, IN APPENZELL.

how to choose when a hundred places beckon us in different directions. However, a learned medical adviser comes to the rescue, and after carefully weighing the pros and cons, issues orders

which the hopeful invalid is glad to obey, although they restrict him to some particular locality. But to the traveller, whose mind and body are both strong and healthy—

‘To the traveller belongs the world
In all its broad extent.’

Wherever he can find a footing there is his kingdom; every road, every mountain, every lark in the air belongs to him. The farther he goes the farther he wishes to go; and when at the end of a happy summer he is brought to an unwelcome halt, it is only because time fails him, and the lucky purse of Prince Fortunatus has been gradually exhausted by constant hotel-bills.

He sits over his map of Switzerland, like a child in a strawberry-bed, carefully scanning it, and feeling quite at a loss to determine what beauties he shall pluck this year. The winter lamp is very probably still burning when he spreads it out before him on the table, so that his eye may take in the whole of it at once—the grand land of the Titans, which after all is but of liliputian size. It is but one small mesh in the great network of degrees covering the globe, and yet it contains some of the world’s most mighty giants. When the spirit of creation was at work in the olden times, he chose this spot as the scene of his labours; and here, high above sea and land, he raised a mighty stronghold, a temple of Nature that cannot be shaken, and of which the poet sings:

‘Thou hast raised up thy pillars,
And founded thy temple.’

The tower which failed at Babel here raises its head high above the clouds, and looks east and west, south and north. Long ages ago, the neighbouring Germans, Italians, and Frenchmen appointed certain members of their own

respective races to be its warders; and here at its foot they still dwell together like friends and brothers, and all alike claim ancient fellowship with Switzerland.

Gazing eastward from its glittering turrets, you can look far into Austrian territory, and see how the Tyrolese mountains advance close up to the very portal; but between Switzerland and Tyrol there is a rampart formed by the mighty torrent of the young Rhine. From this point the frontier line is coincident with the river, and passes through the lovely Bodensee, or Lake Constance; and if you look across its blue surface northwards you have German territory before you, while still farther on the river Rhine again forms the northern boundary. Peaceable German and Swiss towns stand opposite one another on its banks; German tones and German songs resound equally from both sides of the river, nor do they die away until we reach the west, where the French tongue reigns predominant; for to the west lies the Empire of the French, whose language has quite gained the upper hand in that region, most favoured of the gods, which lies about the Lake of Geneva; and French is to be heard in the neighbouring districts, though the inhabitants are all members of the Republic. Beautiful as a garden is the land into which the watchman on the frontier here gazes; but southwards, towards Italy, the towering peaks are again piled higher and higher, till they threaten to storm the heights of heaven. There the eternal glaciers gird the land closely in an indissoluble coat of mail, and the sentry points the gazer in one direction to the giant battlements of the St. Bernard, the Dent d’Herens, the

Matterhorn, and Monte Rosa ; and, in the other, to the proud walls of the Engadine highland, the wild beauty of the Bernina group, and on to the Peak of Ciavalatsch, the most advanced outpost on the eastern side.

Many a messenger from the Siren-land comes laden with greetings and caresses from sun and flowers, and strives to penetrate the rocky fortress in his desire to embroider the inflexible stone walls with the charming verdure and blossoms of the south. Italy tries to open the iron gates with the golden key of lovely Chiavenna ; and soft lulling breezes, such as once intoxicated kings, are wafted up to the watchmen from Mendrisio, Lugano, Locarno, and Bellinzona. But they are never off their guard, and although Italian is the language of the district, people are as glad here as they are on the borders of France to belong to the Confederation and to be free citizens of Switzerland.

Switzerland is nearly fifty (German) miles long from east to west.* The green Jura constitute her less lofty bulwarks to the north, and extend from the borders of France to Lake Constance in several parallel lines ; and her principal rampart is formed by the Central Alps opposite, which spring from French and Italian territory, and, after crossing the battlements of the Bernina and the mighty watch-tower of the St. Gotthard, where they tie themselves up into huge knots, they pass over into the Tyrol.

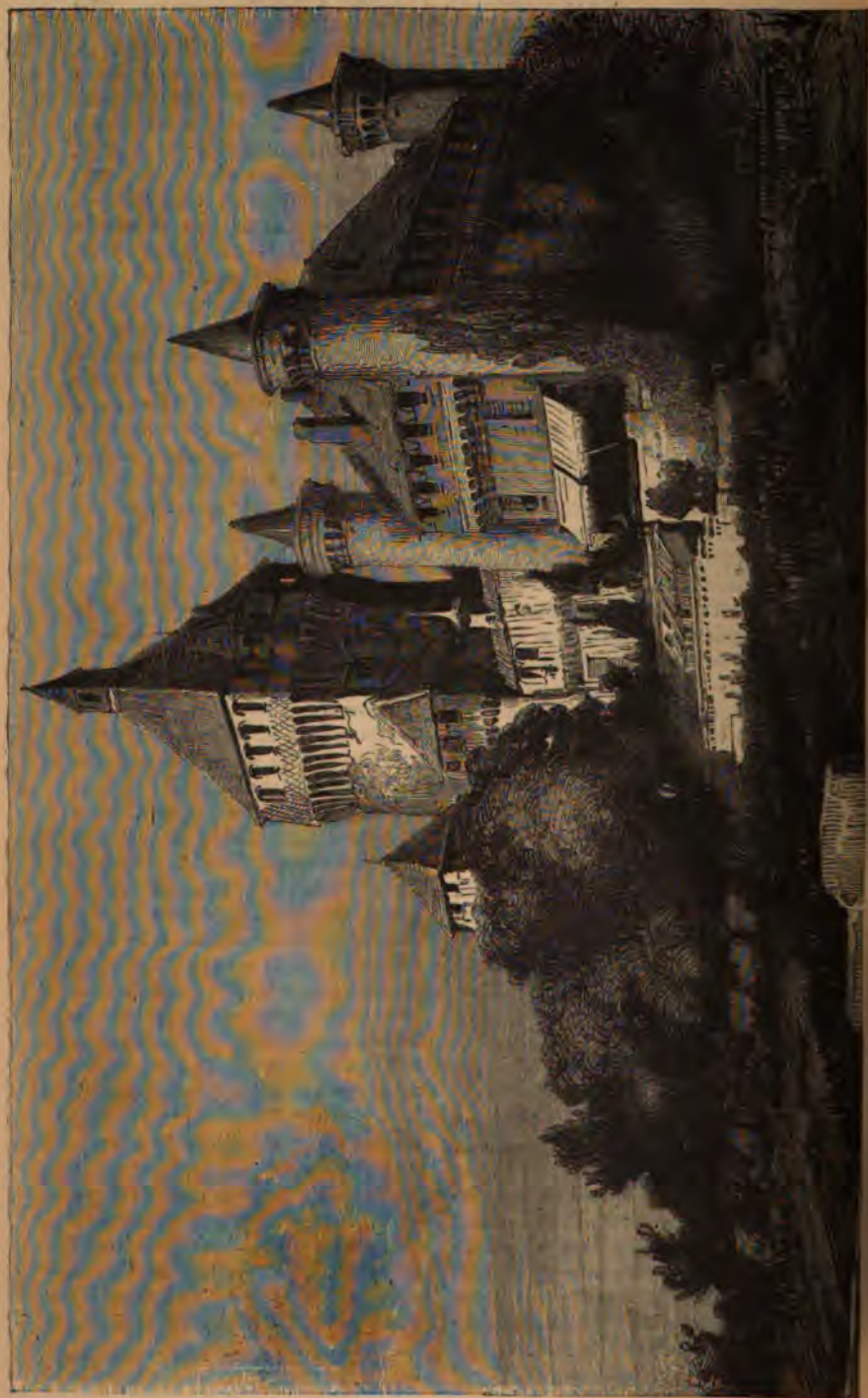
Between these two mountain-ranges—the Jura and the Central Alps—lies the largest valley to be found in the whole continent of Europe. It rises gently from the southern foot of the Jura to the northern foot of the Alps, and

is as large as a small kingdom, but as highly cultivated as a lovely garden. In ancient times the waters rushed violently through it from the north side of the Alps, and the glaciers ploughed it up ; and between them they shaped the furrow-like valleys we see at the present day—they piled up the hills, made the entire soil, and left behind them a legacy of wonderful fertility. The great valley is still intersected by innumerable streams and rivers ; and these, together with its lovely lakes, have turned it into a *terra incantata*, an enchanted land, than which there is none more bewitching to be found in any quarter of the globe.

Nowhere else in the world does water assume such enchanting forms, and whether we see it in the shape of glaciers or eternal snow, fresh glad some springs, tumultuous rivers, dashing waterfalls, or quiet lakes, we feel that, combined as it is with the fresh verdure of the meadows and the varied hues of the rocks, its charms are certainly more powerful here than anywhere else. To the west of this blooming region lies the Lake of Geneva, towards which hurry the mighty waters of the Rhone system. Does it not resemble a festal goblet filled with champagne, crowned with flowers and vines, and redolent of life and enjoyment ? Then, in the east, we have Lake Constance, reposing in calm grave beauty between her well-wooded pastoral shores, and surrounded by a hard-working busy population. But between these two, and winding in and out of the mountains and valleys, lie the lakes of Zurich and Zug and Vierwaldstätter,* the glorious Walensee, and farther west Thun, Biel, and Neuenburg.

* Lake of the Four Forest Cantons, i.e. Lucerne.

* About 230 miles English.



CASTLE OF VILLERET, BURGUNDY, ON THE LAKE OF GENEVA.



OLD HOUSES IN ST. GALL.

There they lie like a set of gems, sometimes looking dark, at others gleaming with blue and greenish gold ; lending themselves in one place to the requirements of active trade, and in another setting themselves to control the wild floods to which Alpine streams are subject in the spring-time. But about them all one seems to hear the rustle of old heroic legends and the whisper of sweet woodland poetry, and if these fail their place is occupied by various flourishing branches of industry, which look forth from smiling windows in many a pleasant spot. Far away from here, on the other side of the towering wall of Alps which seem to kiss the clouds, the waters of Lugano and Maggiore lie rippling at the base of the mountains on the frontier, and their shores are adorned with all the bewitching charms of the south.

But the great father of the whole, the primeval founder and originator of the Alps and of the whole country, is beyond question the vast mass of the St. Gotthard. The Bernese and Rhenish Alps to the north, the ranges of Valais and the Grisons to the south, lean against and spring from him after the manner of colossal buttresses ; and besides this they form the grand aqueducts through which his waters flow down into the surrounding country and to all points of the compass, where they are known by the several names of the Ticino, the Reuss, the Rhone, and the Rhine.

‘ This is the birthplace of rivers ; ’

here these wild infants are nursed at the white bosom of the glaciers, and then leap down the fissured sides of the Alpine precipices to prove their strength, and bring blessings and sometimes ruin upon the men who dwell in the plain below.

And thus, as we take a bird’s-eye view of it, Switzerland lies beneath us, a wonderfully-organised self-contained whole, fortified on all sides ; and if the contrast between it and all the surrounding countries seems to need explanation, we can only account for it on the principles which explain the presence of an island-mountain in the midst of the ocean.

The suitable clothing of the giant structure which Vulcan and Neptune had combined to rear was undertaken by Nature ; and accordingly she and Death had a struggle for the mastery, which they pursued even up into the regions of everlasting ice, the one for ever trying to quicken into life, the other for ever seeking to destroy. Her success was, however, speedy enough in the hilly district in the centre, where the soft well-watered soil soon brought forth magnificent trees and clothed itself with plants and shrubs. The meadows at once bloomed forth into rare beauty and luxuriance, and when man came upon the stage at a later period it was mere sport for him to substitute the golden grain of Ceres for the wild grasses. The thick leafy woods gave place to orchards of fruit-trees, which now cover large surfaces of the country ; the wild brushwood sacred to Pan gave way to the gladsome vine of Bacchus ; and places which in ancient times produced nothing but dismal bog-weeds are now converted into fragrant blooming gardens, whose bright blossoms rejoice the traveller’s eye.

Higher up among the mountains, where the more tender plants could not follow her, Nature was accompanied yet some distance farther on her way by the beautiful maple, the beech, the holly, the ivy, and the haw-

thorn ; but after that she apportioned this region to the more hardy pines, which boldly and bravely struck their roots into the rocks, and pressed onward victoriously till they reached an elevation of some 6000 feet.

Life is a solemn matter to these trees, and their vesture is dark and solemn too in colour, like the

rocks they are intended to clothe. Life with them is a solemn matter indeed, for the icy powers of destruction, which make a mock of life, have conspired together against them. Down from the heights above swoops the storm on its iron pinions, breaking their heads or tearing them to pieces in fierce delight, though their



roots hold fast to their stony anchorage. In the spring the avalanches dash down into their midst, a whole mountain-side slips down and subsides into a valley, wild torrents of water from melting snow and glaciers tear and tug at their stems ; but they defy them all for many a century, and afford shelter to the human

beings who dwell in the valleys below, while they send out the brave Siberian pine and the larch as their pioneers higher up the Alps. The poor cowering dwarf-fir, which looks as if it were crawling upon all fours, makes its way to still greater heights, and is met with on the very verge of the empire of snow.

But these hardy climbers are not without charming and winsome little companions in the flowers which gladden their ruinous way, and exhibit a splendour and brilliant sweetness such as the degenerate blossoms of the lowlands know nothing of. Short is their spring, and short too is their participation in the fair joys of existence; and therefore is it that they adorn themselves with all the beauty of the sun while they bathe their tiny leaves and roots in the cool snow-water. Look at the tufted blossoms which the gnarled weather-beaten stem of the Alpine rose* has put forth in honour of lovely spring, the gala season of the Alpine world; what a glorious veil of purple they have cast over the dark rock! Which of us gathered them for the first time to adorn his travelling-cap without a thrill of triumphant delight?

The Alpine tourist loves the Alpine rose as dearly as the Alpine violet, with its lilac blossoms, and the gleaming white fairy-flowers of the Edelweiss, which are in such great request. But though these three may be the best known, they are lost amid a profusion of other mountain flowers. In a life which is solitary to an almost pathetic degree, they come before us with a special charm; and as they grow on their lonely heights are quite calculated to captivate the heart, not merely of the professional botanist, but of every true friend of Nature.

Their lot is shared by no living thing save mosses and lichens, the latter of which are Nature's seal, impressed by her on the most elevated peaks, in token that she has been there on her life-giving mission, though she has failed to gain a footing. The traveller is both touched and astonished to

see these traces of life casting a tinge of golden green or dusky gray over the hard stone of the barest and loftiest peaks. The lichen which grows on the bare peaks of the Jungfrau, in the kingdom of eternal frost, nearly 13,000 feet above the level of the sea, is called by the botanist *Umbilicaria virginis*, and is the last sign of organic life to be met with.

Two powers are for ever wrestling with one another among the Alps. Life struggles up from the green valleys beneath, and Death comes down from the heights above. Light and warmth are the weapons of the one, and he fights by day and in the summer; the other wars by night and in the winter, and brings cold and darkness in his train. The kingdom of light has won a thousand victories, as is testified by the crumbling stones which lie, like the bleaching bones of the fallen, in the valleys and on the slopes, which were once ancient battle-fields, but are now clothed with kindly vegetation. Fresh victories are recorded every year, but the struggle will never cease.

Down here in the valley gentle spring clears the last snow from off the meadows which it has been fertilising; but it still lies cold and dreary on the glacier-fields above, and the great mass, as it freezes harder and harder, only becomes more compressed and capable of greater resistance. Here the summer rain falls in refreshing showers upon fields and pastures; but up above fresh snow is being repeatedly deposited upon the old, and when the whole mass has been pressed and squeezed together, and gradually converted into ice by alternate thawings and freezings, then, slowly but surely, it begins to move and glide down the mountain ravines towards the

* *Rhododendron ferrugineum*.



GROUP OF SIBERIAN PINES.

scene of blooming life in the valley beneath. Such are the glaciers, whose demoniacal grandeur fills the soul with horror and astonishment. On their broad backs, which are sometimes several miles wide, they carry dikes of stone, and in the course of centuries pile them up into great walls of rubbish. Time is for ever gnawing and hammering at the lofty pinnacles of rock, and the result of his labours is shown in these fragments of stone, which he detaches and throws down upon the moving ice. Thus, day and night, summer and winter, the work of wild destruction is carried on by the hands of Titans, with a noise like the roar of thunder. Every now and then great masses, like prodigious frozen water-spouts, come racing and tearing down; with wild phantom-like springs they sweep over the precipices and forests and down the meadows to the dwellings of men, bringing ruin and destruction with them. These are the avalanches.

Life and death are nowhere brought into such close proximity as in Switzerland; and this its inhabitants have learnt to know full well in the course of the hundreds and thousands of years which have elapsed since first they, from their valleys, entered upon the wild conflict. They have never beaten a cowardly retreat in any one quarter of the great battle-field. Inch by inch and foot by foot they have won from their iron foe the soil on which to build their huts, sow their corn, and keep their cattle; and, accordingly, the hilly country of Central Switzerland and the lake-district is abundantly blessed with corn and wine; industry raises large factories, engines rattle, numerous chimneys send up their modern tribute of smoke to the god of labour; and where once the

wretched lake-dweller sank his piles and reared his wooden dwelling among the sedge there now stand handsome villas and richly decorated châteaux, which bear eloquent testimony to the prosperity as well as the taste of their owners and inmates.

The people who dwell among the Alps now are just what they were in the olden days. In time of peace they would milk their cows, wrestle with one another, dance with the maidens, and tame the wild bull; but when their liberty or the ancient rights of their native mountains were menaced, they would at once obey the summons of their captain. Silently and gravely they would march down into the valley, girt with the rusty weapons of their forefathers—a mere handful of men, oftentimes a hundred against a thousand, but all pledged to conquer or die.

How often, in reading the chronicles of Switzerland, do we come across some such words as these!—

‘My brave true lad, my brave Swiss lad
Come from the dance away!
Our captain calls, and you must leave
The ring of girls so gay.
Messengers have come far,
Saying that the foe’s at hand.’

And how often he was at hand! How often was the gleam of the fiery beacon to be seen, and the sound of the alarm-bell to be heard upon the mountains! But no sooner was their work done than the mountaineers would return to their peaceful hearths, quiet, silent, and unassuming as when they quitted them.

This plainness and simplicity, this indifference to all the pleasures of life, this constant vigilance and incessant struggle with snow and ice, water and rock—this it is which constitutes the poetry of the High Alps, and the mountaineer is quite sensible of it,

though he may not be able to express himself in language so elegant as that of Schiller's herdsman :

' We are off to the mountains, but we
shall return
With the cry of the cuckoo and the
song of the birds !'

And now, my fellow-traveller, you may take your hat and your staff, for you know your destination, and you know what you have to expect.

We are off to the mountains !

But first observe that, ever since the summer began, great preparations have been in hand to insure you a festal reception, and, wherever you go, you will see tokens of hospitality smiling at you from the shining windows. About this same time every year there is a great stir made by many thousand pair of hands, which are hard at work scouring and brushing, polishing and restuffing, whitewashing, painting, and making beds. Signboards are freshened up or replaced by smart new ones, gold lace is put on in the grand palatial hotel, and convolvulus seeds are sown in the window flower-pots. All, down to the tiniest mountain-inn, are busy putting on fresh attire, that they may be fit to receive the birds of passage, who are already spreading their wings at home preparatory to taking flight. The cellars and store-rooms are being well filled, and plenty reigns all along the great highway.

If you be your mother's spoilt child, you may look at the hundred-gated palaces, where luxury walks in gold and silver. The tap of your golden finger will cause the doors to fly noisily open, and a troop of ministering spirits in gala attire will be ready to obey your orders.

If, on the other hand, you be the child of simplicity, you will

pass the Siren palace by, and find all the accommodation you need at the village inn, kept by a comfortable-looking, rosy-faced landlord or a plump landlady. Believing that they cannot advertise the good cookery afforded by their establishment by any means more effectual than the exhibition of their own well-rounded figures, they stand at their doors in snow-white aprons, inquire kindly and anxiously how the weary traveller finds himself after his day's journey, ascertain all that he needs for body and spirit, and then conduct him with hearty old-fashioned hospitality into some bright cheerful little room with an oriel window looking out upon a bean-garden.

Let us hope the stars will keep watch, or, better still, your own lucky star, so that you may find a clear sky awaiting you in the morning, and may be wakened by sunbeams and not by rain pattering against the window, rushing down the water-pipes, and creating a new and nameless river in the midst of the village street. For, alas—and the sigh will be echoed by thousands—the climate of Switzerland is most unfortunately variable. The spirits who manage matters in the clefts and hollows of the mountains up above are busy enough brewing *something* in the mist and darkness. What it is no one knows, but they make a wild piece of work sometimes—such, indeed, as none but the patient man can bear with equanimity. Those who forget to provide themselves with patience as well as with easy walking-shoes will have an uncomfortable journey; they will go on their way with downcast faces and gloomy thoughts, and will find nothing to please them even in the cheerful bow-windowed room over the bean-garden. Oftentimes even



CHINESE HOUSES.

Goethe's apparently true adage turns out to be false: 'And when there has been rain enough, why, then it leaves off raining;' for often when there has been rain enough and to spare for weeks past it still will not leave off.

With the rain, too, comes a pale leaden-coloured fog, rolling down the slopes and into the streets, and trailing its long weary graveclothes up and down before your window. There is nothing but a blank in place of the lakes, forests, pastures, towns, and illuminated mountain-tops which you expected to see. And besides the fog there is cold; the very children laugh at your summer clothing,



and it makes you feel ridiculous in your own eyes. You may pull your hat down over your eyes, wrap your plaid more closely round you, drink desperate quantities of Kirschwasser, or the still more famous Engadine Iva, smoke one cigar after another, turn over the *Bernese Bund*, take up the *Journal de Genève*, or try to amuse yourself with descriptions of sunny expeditions among the mountains in the entertaining *Zürich Alpenpost*; but your mind is absent, and your eyes wander away from the page before you to the window, in the hope of seeing some dove with an olive-branch in her mouth announcing the termination of the deluge.

And lo, she comes !

The landlord has just returned from some expedition ; and, as he stands dripping on the threshold, he announces his good news, which comes like an angel's message : ' Ladies and gentlemen, we may look for fine weather to-morrow. There's a change in the wind, and it is blowing sharp from the north. I think the barometer must be rising. Cheer up !'

And now, of course, every one rushes to the hateful thing in the window corner, which has so long stood obstinately at 'Rain,' and it really has risen one-tenth of an inch. Moreover, there is a gleam upon the heights above ; the mist is rolling away from the mountain-tops in long ribbons and streaks, and hovers in torn fragments round the jagged pinnacles. Shadowy trees are to be seen ; then a bit of blue sky, about as big as a forget-me-not, appears in the midst of the gray driving gloom. But it does not last more than a moment ; and then comes a fresh shower of rain, which, with most people, quite extinguishes the faint hopes they had begun to

entertain. Those who understand the subject, however, know that the weather now is sure to improve ; and their judgment is confirmed by the guides, who stand and gaze or wander up and down before the door of the inn.

Preparations are accordingly made for the following morning—no great matter for the genuine Alpine tourist, who carries with him more good-humour than luggage, but a more considerable business for those slaves of habit who will not dispense with the same amount of ballast as is usually considered necessary in capital cities.

Then there is the engaging of guides and porters, the chaffering over horses and carriages, the arranging of plans and settlement of disputes ; and the upshot of it all often is that ill-humour vaults into the saddle the next morning with the rest of the party, or takes possession of the best seat in the carriage. Any one who has been a quiet witness of such scenes as these—and they are of daily occurrence during the summer months at places of such resort as Andermatt, Flüelen, Brunnen, &c.—will be disposed to congratulate himself more than ever on being a pedestrian.

At length, early one cold foggy morning, we start for the mountains ; our cheeks are wetted by the wings of the wind as it blows down the valley, and we hear the sound of the mountain torrents as they rush along rejoicing in their life, the rustle of the pines as they shake large heavy drops of mist down on our hats, and the song of the thrush as he whistles a merry greeting to us from some rocky perch.

On we go, up some steep ascent, higher and higher, over loose slippery stones and paths flooded with rain ; or perhaps our way lies

through marshy Alpine meadows, where there is no path at all, where the beautiful cattle stand close together in groups, and seem to welcome us by the tinkling of their bells. We have long since left the trees behind us, and the silver streams which issue like spun threads from the flower-strewn rocks become thinner and thinner as we mount upwards.

As the traveller stops for a moment to rest, the fog will perhaps divide, and far below him, all bathed in golden sunshine, he will see a grassy valley dotted with miniature houses, and the dark pine-forest looking like so much fine brushwood; or he may look through the gray mist into a green mass of glistening ice, such as is to be seen in the grand region of the glaciers. But whatever it be, it is but for a moment, a tantalising moment, and then the curtain falls again. However, the traveller presses on towards his goal hopefully now, and his mind is filled with pleasant anticipations of the sight in store for him.

The gray chaos beneath rolls over and over, seething and heaving as if it were about to give birth to a new world, and then, as if it had heard once more the voice of the great Creator saying 'Let there be light,' the dreary shapeless waste gradually vanishes. A gleam of blue sky appears overhead, and is followed by a ray of golden sunshine; and then, behold! there is a new beautiful world before us, and the grand separation between moist and dry is accomplished. What look at first like little islands rising from out the seething flood speedily assume the form of mountains and chains of mountains. The towering masses presently exchange their dark hues for shimmering silver, and at last are flooded with the golden light of the setting sun,

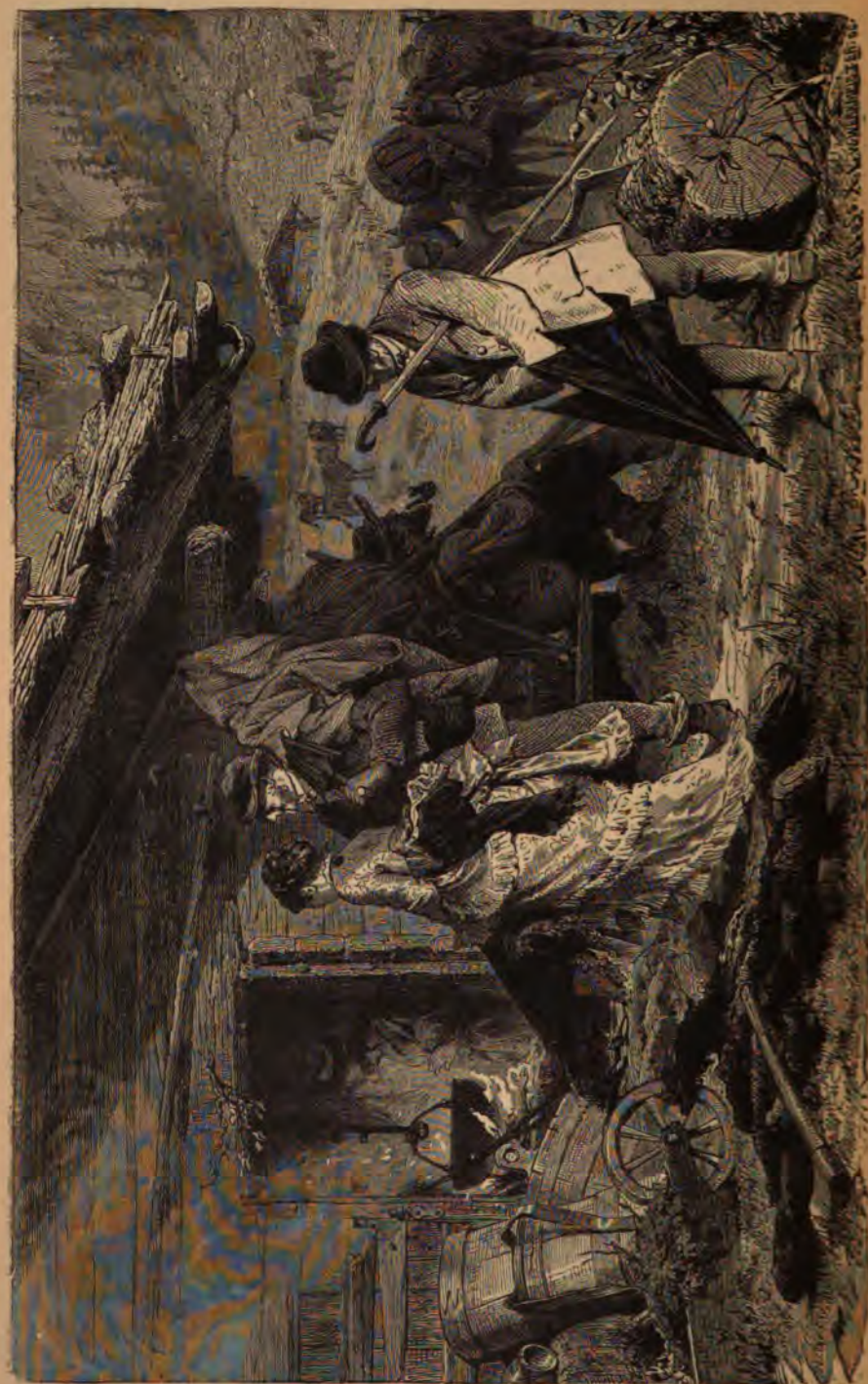
while around their heads float cloudlets of pearly white and softest rose colour, looking like doves and Cupids. Outspread beneath us lie the green valleys, twining wreath-like among the mountains; and the sparkling lakes, the eyes of the landscape, shine brightly up into the clear sky.

Man, puny man, gazes in rapture at the fulness of beauty here at his feet, or allows his eye to follow the eagle in his flight upwards to those snow-clad peaks which crown the landscape so solemnly with their majestic beauty. Like kings they sit enthroned above, joining in the heavenly anthem and ever declaring the glory of God.

But the sublimest sight of all yet remains to be seen.

Down sinks the sun, and darkness covers the valleys; darkness creeps gradually up the sides of the mountains, and Night throws her mantle over them; and then, just when we fancy that the light has quite died away, it flames out again with fiery glow upon the topmost summits. Once more, and for the last time, the sacred fires are kindled upon the mountain-altars by the far-reaching rays sent forth by the departed sun. There is a momentary blaze of glory; and for a short space we watch the Alpine glow in a rapture of delight. Then Night begins her reign, sending forth the moon to glorify the silvery peaks, while she sets upon the brow of every mountain a gem-like coronet of stars.

Man, however, wraps his mantle about him with a shiver, for the wind blows keen and icy cold from the glaciers. He and his companions draw closer together over the hospitable fire in the snug little mountain-inn, where they are joined by many a belated traveller in the course of the even-



ALIGHTING AT A CHÂTEAU.

ing. Those who have missed the sunset hope to see the sunrise ; while those who have seen both to perfection are quite divided as to which of the two ought to receive the palm.

For thou art ever sublime and beautiful, thou glorious land of the Alps ! whether seen in the purple light of the setting sun, or in the chaste golden beauty of early dawn, ever sublime and beautiful !

What a sight it is to see all the roads and pathways teeming with life on some bright summer morning ! Every favourite resort is a gay scene of bustle, and the artist will find capital subjects for his pencil in the various groups which meet the eye at every turn.

The chalet which stands close at hand is gray with age, and from its open door pours forth a thick cloud of smoke, which spreads like a veil over the green grass. Dark figures are to be seen standing around the fire in the background,

where they are busy with gigantic black caldrons. The wind whistles keenly over the plateau ; and as the evening clouds drift across the sky, the whole scene is lonely and desolate in the extreme.

You, my fellow-traveller, when you have put away your alpenstock, and have exchanged the brilliant tints of summer for the fog and gloom of winter—you, I say, will perhaps take from your pocket-book some of the withered flowers you have gathered on the Alps ; and, as you look at them one by one, you will perhaps think pensively of the sunshine in which they once basked. But the artist can boast a much fairer bouquet, and one which never fades. He can show you the beauties of Switzerland ; and if, when your memory reverts longingly to the past, you take his drawing in your hand, the originals will seem to rise before you.

And now let us be off and away to the mountains !

(To be continued.)

SAVED BY A SONG.

CHAPTER I.

It was Christmas-eve. A cold old-fashioned Christmas, with snow lying thick on the ground, and still falling heavily, with a touch of fog in the air. It was past ten o'clock, and the streets and lanes of the great city were all but deserted. Merchant and broker, clerk and warehouseman, and the rest of the busy crowd who had thronged those streets by day, had one by one drifted away to their homes; and the lofty warehouses loomed black and forbidding over the silent thoroughfares. Here and there the gleam from a solitary window struggled ineffectually with the outer darkness, and served but to bring into stronger relief the general gloom and solitude.

And nowhere was the darkness deeper, or the sense of desolation more profound, than in St. Winifred's-court. St. Winifred's is one of those queer little alleys which intersect the heart of eastern London, and consists, with one exception, of houses let out as offices, and utterly deserted at night. The court is bounded on one side by St. Winifred's Church, while in one corner stands a quaint old house, occupying a nearly triangular piece of ground, and forming the exception we have referred to, having been for many years the residence of St. Winifred's organist, Michael Fray.

Many of these ancient churches still remain in odd nooks and corners of the City; relics of a time when London merchants made their homes in the same

spot whereon they earned their daily bread, worshipping on Sundays in these narrow aisles, and when their time came asking no better resting-place than beneath those venerable flagstones on which they had knelt in life. The liberality of ancient founders and benefactors has left many of these old churches richly endowed, and still, Sunday after Sunday, rector and curate mount their respective desks, and struggle through their weekly task; but portly aldermen and dignified burgesses no longer fill the high-backed pews. A wheezy verger and pew-opener, with a dozen or so of ancient men and women, care-takers of adjoining warehouses or offices, too often form the only congregation.

St. Winifred's, like many of its sister edifices, though small in extent, is a noble monument of ecclesiastical architecture, having been designed by an architect of world-wide fame, and boasting stained-glass windows of richest colour and exquisite design, and oaken carvings of flower and leaf to which the touch of a master hand has imparted all but living beauty. The western extremity of the church abuts upon a narrow lane, on a week-day one of the busiest in the City; but on Sundays the broad portal is flung open in vain, for its invitation is addressed to empty streets and deserted houses.

The only sign of life, on this Christmas-eve, in St. Winifred's-court, was a faint gleam of flickering firelight proceeding from one of the windows of the quaint

three-cornered house in which Michael Fray passed his solitary existence. Many years before the period of our story, the same month had taken from him wife and child, and since that time Michael Fray had lived desolate, his only solace being the rare old organ, the friend and companion of his lonely hours. The loss of his wife and daughter had left him without kith or kin. His father and mother had died in his early youth, and an only brother, a gifted but wayward youth, had in early life run away to sea, and had there found a watery grave. Being thus left alone in the world, Michael Fray's love for music, which had always been the most marked feature of his character, had become intensified into an absolute passion. Evening after evening, when darkness had settled on the City, and none could complain that his music interfered with business, or distracted the attention from the nobler clink of gold, he was accustomed to creep quietly into the church, and there 'talk to himself,' as he called it, at the old organ, which answered him back again with a tender sympathy and power of consolation which no mere human listener could ever have afforded. The organ of St. Winifred's was of comparatively small size, and made but scanty show of pipes or pedals; but the blackened case and yellow much-worn keys had been fashioned by the cunning brain and skilful fingers of 'Father Smith' himself, and never had the renowned old organ-builder turned out a more skilful piece of workmanship. And Michael Fray, by use of years and loving tender study, had got by heart every pipe and stop in the rare old instrument, and had acquired an almost magical power of bringing out its

tenderest tones and noblest harmonies.

Hear him this Christmas-eve, as he sits before the ancient keyboard, one feeble candle dimly glimmering over the well-worn page before him; flickering weirdly over the ancient carving, and calling into momentary life the effigies of mitred abbot and mailed crusader. A feeble old man, whose sands of life have all but run out; a sadly weak and tremulous old man, with shaking hands and dim uncertain eyes. But when they are placed upon those yellow keys, the shaking hands shake no longer; the feeble sight finds no labour in those well-remembered pages. Under the touch of Michael Fray's deft fingers the ancient organ becomes instinct with life and harmony. The grand old masters lend their noblest strains, and could they revisit earth, need ask no better interpreter. From saddest wail of sorrow to sweetest strain of consolation,—from the dirge for the loved and lost to the psalm of the jubilant victor,—each shade of human passion, each tender message of divine encouragement, take form and colour in succession, under the magic of that old man's touch. Thus, sometimes borrowing the song of other singers, sometimes wandering into quaint Æolian harmonies, the spontaneous overflow of his own rare genius, Michael Fray sat, and made music, charming his sorrows to temporary sleep.

Time crept on, but the player heeded it not, till the heavy bell in the tower above his head boomed forth the hour of midnight, and recalled him to reality again. With two or three wailing minor chords he brought his weird improvisation to an end.

'Dear me,' he said, with a heavy sigh, 'Christmas again! Christ-

mas again! How many times, I wonder? Each time I think, "Well, this *will* be the last;" and yet Christmas comes again, and finds me here still, all alone. Dear, dear! First, poor Dick; and then my darling Alice and little Nell—all gone! Young and bright and merry—all taken! And here am I—old, sad, and friendless—and yet I live on, live on! Well, I suppose God knows best! While thus thinking aloud, the old man was apparently searching for something among his music-books, and now produced an ancient page of manuscript, worn almost to fragments, but pasted, for preservation, on a piece of paper of later date. 'Yes, here it is; poor Dick's Christmas song. What a sweet voice he had, dear boy! If he had only lived—but there! I'm murmuring again. God's will be done!'

He placed the music on the desk before him, and, after a moment's pause, began, in tender flute-like tones, to play the melody, at the same time crooning the words in a feeble voice. He played one verse of the song, then stopped and drew his sleeve across his eyes. The sense of his desolation appeared to come anew upon him; he seemed to shrink down, doubly old, doubly feeble, doubly forsaken—when, lo! a marvel! Suddenly from the lonely street without, in that chill midnight, came the sound of a violin, and a sweet young voice singing the self-same words to the self-same tender air—the song written by his dead-and-gone brother forty years before.

The effect on Michael Fray was electrical. For a moment he staggered, but caught at the keyboard before him, and held it with a convulsive grasp.

'Am I dreaming? or are my senses leaving me? Poor Dick's

Christmas carol; and I could almost swear the voice is my own lost Nellie's. Can this be death at last? and are the angels welcoming me home with the song I have loved so dearly? No, surely; either I am going mad, or that is a real living voice! But whose—whose? Heaven help me to find out!' And with his whole frame quivering with excitement—without pausing even to close the organ, or to extinguish his flickering candle—the old man groped his way down the narrow winding stair which led to the street, and, hurriedly closing the door behind him, stepped forth bareheaded into the snowy night.

CHAPTER II.

FOR some hours before Michael Fray was startled, as we have related, by the mysterious echo of his brother's song, an old man and a young girl had been making their way Citywards from the south-eastern side of London. Both walked wearily, as though they had tramped from a long distance; and once or twice the young girl wiped away a tear, though she strove hard to hide it from her companion, and forced herself to speak with a cheerfulness in strange contrast with her sunken cheeks and footsore gait. Every now and then, in passing through the more frequented streets, they would pause; and the man, who carried a violin, would strike up some old ballad tune with a vigour and power of execution which even his frost-nipped fingers and weary limbs could not wholly destroy; while the girl, with a sweet though very sad voice, accompanied him with the appropriate words. But their attempts were miserably un-

productive. In such bitter weather, few who could help it would stay away from their warm fire-sides; and those whom stern necessity kept out of doors seemed only bent on dispatching their several tasks, and to have no time or thought to expend on a couple of wandering tramps singing by the roadside. Still they toiled on, every now and then making a fresh 'pitch' at some likely corner, only too often ordered to 'move on' by a stern policeman. As they drew nearer to the City, and the hour grew later, the passers-by became fewer and farther between, and the poor wanderers felt that it was idle even to seek for charity in those deserted silent streets. At last the old man stopped and groaned aloud.

'What is it, grandfather dear? Don't give in now, when we have come so far. Lean on me—do; I'm hardly tired at all; and I daresay we shall do better to-morrow.'

'To-morrow!' said the old man bitterly; 'to-morrow it will be too late. I don't mind hunger, and I don't mind cold; but the shame of it, the disgrace—after having struggled against it all these years—to come to the workhouse at last! It isn't for myself I mind—beggars mustn't be choosers; and I daresay better men than I have slept in a casual ward—but you, my tender little Lily. The thought breaks my heart!—it kills me!' And the old man sobbed aloud.

'Dear grandfather, you are always thinking of me, and never of yourself. What does it matter after all? it's only the name of the thing. I'm sure I don't mind it one bit,'—the shudder of horror which passed over the girl's frame gave the lie to her pious falsehood; 'I daresay it is not so very

bad, and after all, something may happen to prevent it even now.'

'What can happen, short of a miracle, in these deserted streets?'

'Well, let us hope for the miracle then, dear. God has never quite deserted us in our deepest troubles, and I don't believe He will forsake us now.'

As she spoke she drew her thin shawl more closely round her, shivering in spite of herself under the cold blast, which seemed to receive no check from her scanty coverings. Again the pair crept on, and passing beneath the lofty wall of St. Winifred's Church, stood beneath it for a temporary shelter from the driving wind and snow. While so standing they caught the faint sounds of the organ solemnly pealing within.

'Noble music,' said the old man, as the final chords died away; 'noble music, and a soul in the playing. That man, whoever he may be, should have a generous heart.'

'Hush, grandfather,' said the girl; 'he is beginning to play again.'

Scarcely had the music commenced, however, than the pair gazed at each other in breathless surprise.

'Lily darling, do you hear what he is playing?' said the old man, in an excited whisper.

'A strange coincidence,' the girl replied.

'Strange! it is more than strange! Lily, darling, *who* could play that song?'

The melody came to an end, and all was silence. There was a moment's pause, and then, as if by a common impulse, the old man drew his bow across the strings, and the girl's sweet voice carolled forth the second verse of the song. Scarcely had they ended, when a door opened at the foot of the church tower just beside them,

and Michael Fray, bareheaded, with his scanty locks blown about by the winter wind, stood before them. He hurried forward, and then stood still, shamefaced, bewildered. The song had called up the vision of a gallant young sailor, full of life and health, as Michael had seen his brother for the last time on the day when he sailed on his fatal voyage. He had hurried forth forgetting the years that had past, full of tender memories of happy boyish days; to find, alas, only a couple of wandering beggars, singing for bread.

'I beg your pardon,' he said, striving vainly to master his emotion; 'you sang a song just now which—which—a song which was a favourite of a dear friend of mine many years ago. Will you—will you tell me where you got it?'

'By the best of all titles, sir,' the old fiddler answered, drawing himself up with a touch of artistic pride; 'I wrote it myself, words and music both.'

'Nay, sir,' said Michael sternly, 'you rob the dead. A dearly loved brother of mine wrote that song forty years ago.'

'Well, upon my word!' said the old fiddler, waxing wroth—'then your brother must have stolen it from me! What might this precious brother's name be, pray?'

'An honest name, a name I am proud to speak,' said Michael, firing up in his turn; 'his name was Richard Fray!'

The old street musician staggered as if he had received a blow.

'What!' he exclaimed, peering eagerly into the other's face; 'then you are my brother Michael, for I am Richard Fray!'

* * * * *

Half an hour later, and the brothers so long parted, so

strangely brought together, were seated round a roaring fire in Michael Fray's quaint three-cornered parlour. Michael's stores had been ransacked for warm dry clothing for the wanderers. Drawers long closed, yielding when opened a sweet scent of lavender, and containing homely skirts and bodices, kept still in loving memory of little Nell, gave up their treasures for Lily's benefit, and Richard Fray's snow-sodden clothes were replaced by Michael's choicest coat and softest slippers. The wanderers had done full justice to a plentiful meal, and a jug of fragrant punch now steamed upon the hob, and was laid under frequent contributions, while Richard Fray told the story of thirty years' wandering, and the brothers found how it had come to pass that, each thinking the other dead, they had lived their lives, and married, and buried their dear ones, being sometimes but a few miles apart, and yet as distant as though severed by the grim Divider himself. And Lily sat on a cushion at her grandfather's feet, a picture of quiet happiness, and sang sweet songs to please the two old men, while Michael lovingly traced in her soft features fanciful likenesses to his lost Nelly, the strange similarity of the sweet voice aiding the tender illusion. And surely no happier family party was gathered together in all England on that Christmas-tide, than that little group round Michael Fray's quiet fireside.

* * * * *

'Well, grandfather dear,' said Lily, after a pause, 'won't you believe in miracles now?'

'My darling,' said the old man, with his voice broken with emotion, 'God forgive me for having ever doubted Him!'

ANGELO J. LEWIS.

CHRISTMAS AT THE BARON'S.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'GERMAN HOME-LIFE.'

'Dans les grandes crises le cœur se brise ou se bronze.' BALZAC.

I.

'COME and see my portrait.'

Two girls were standing on the *perron* of Schloss Waldstein. It was an October morning, bright, crisp, and keen. The sun was warm, the air was cold, the woods were russet. Dew sparkled on the grass; a dew which had been frost earlier in the day, but, kissed hard by the pale god of morning, had trembled into the tears that were now dropping on to the cold earth, over which the death of the year had already cast its irrevocable chill.

'I hate these *grandes chasses*,' said the younger and shorter of the two girls; 'the days seem so long. One gets up early, and after all the fuss and excitement of breakfast, life falls rather flat, and it's a little difficult to work oneself up to the proper amount of enthusiasm, or to care how many hares or foxes have been shot, when these selfish men return.'

'We don't shoot foxes in my country.'

'No. You prefer spending a fortune on a kennel, and breaking your necks in pursuit of the meanest and timidiest of creatures. It is ridiculous to think that it takes a pack of hounds, a thoroughbred horse, Heaven knows how many officials, and a herd of mad scamp-ering men and women to destroy a wretched little beast like a hare or a fox. Come, confess now, Lady Britannia.'

The speaker was a short slight girl some twenty years of age, whose thick black hair, large lamb-

ent hazel-green eyes, irregular features, and little pointed chin, gave her a quaint attractive beauty, which, strictly speaking, was no beauty at all, but rather a piquant charm, leaving one quite in the dark as to the real amount of good looks Nature had endowed her withal.

'Do you think Minna Waldstein pretty?' was a question often heard. No one had ever been found to say 'yes' or 'no' to it. Her beauty depended on her mood, on her health, on the lucky, or unlucky chances of dress and circumstance. It depended still more on the sympathies of her critics. Beauty's prosperity lies in the eye of him that sees it, no less than wit's effect in the ear of him that hears. Seen by the cold critical eye early in the day, the gray light falling on her swarthy skin, the chill air staying the blood in her veins, her large pale-green eyes empty of passion or mirth, her irregular features unlit by pleasure or amusement, it was no wonder if women declared Minna von Waldstein to be an ugly, sallow, insignificant little thing. But seen, as I have seen her over and over again, flushed with exercise, wild with spirits, her blood all aglow with the maddest gallop across country, her eyes sparkling with excitement and delight, she was simply bewitching. Worse still, in a ballroom she was absolutely dangerous. Her sallow skin then appeared like ivory; the rose tint on her cheeks added a strange dazzling lustre to her large somewhat

prominent eyes; those eyes that looked brown shot with green, or green shot with brown, or green pure and simple, or brown soft and honest, according to her mood and fancy. The lashes were long and curly; black, with curious bronze lights at the tips, that gave a strange uncertain fire to her gaze. And when she looked at you kindly and laughed, it was as though a whole flood of sunshine had suddenly poured over you. Anything more un-German (according to the popular idea of Germanity) could not be imagined. Yet Minna Waldstein was a Teutoness of the Teutons in so far as blood went. Her last new passion was Lady Britannia. 'Minna Waldstein is so fickle. The little Waldstein is so capricious. *Die Minna hat ja kein Gemüth!*' Such were the judgments of her admiring friends. But Lady Britannia had set aside all foregone conclusions, and had accepted Minna at her own estimate. 'I am not so bad, if you will only take the trouble to find out my good points,' the girl had said, humbly enough, to her new friend; and Grace Digby for all reply had turned and kissed the spritely penitent between the eyes.

'Come and see my portrait.'

II.

In a large empty room at the back of the forester's house, a young man stood before an easel. The shutters were closed over the lower part of the windows; only the thin tree-tops were visible as one looked up at the cold northern sky. The uncertain light in the room, its bareness and roughness, lent concentration to the light that fell upon the one object of interest within the four blank walls of the bare apartment.

The young man was the forester's

son. He had studied in Paris, in London, in Rome. His name was beginning to be heard in the world of art. Picture-dealers and picture-fanciers respected his signature. He was a straight-limbed, strong-thewed young fellow, with 'broad brows and fair, a fluent hair and fine,' square forward chin, and firmly chiselled mouth. A man who would do, or die in the doing; full of energy, purpose, live blood; possessed by a large, ardent, fierce ambition, with all the fire and none of the inconstancy of genius.

He had come home to see his parents. What more natural than that he should offer to paint the portrait of his patron's daughter, grown since he had seen her last, as his little foster-sister, into wayward womanhood? The offer was made and was accepted.

Baron Waldstein, a poor but proud man, loved everything that could add to his prestige. He went about the Residenz-town puffing his new *protégé*; predicting great things of him, parading the mystery of some wonderful portrait that was to astonish the art-world when the time came, while he kept Karl Werner, a willing captive, shut up in Schloss Waldstein to work at Minna's likeness.

'This sort of people must be made to know their place,' he had said, in a lordly manner, to his young daughter. 'Never forget, Minna, that the Herr Förster is a paid servant, just as much as the meanest scullion or kitchen-wench. And his son is as far from you as the son of your lady's-maid could be.'

'Not quite, father. Karl Werner and I had one mother.'

Minna's own mother had gasped out a broken-hearted existence at Minna's birth, when the kindly Frau Försterin had taken the feeble sickly little infant to her ample bosom, and given it of her own strong wholesome life.

'Stuff and nonsense, Minna! Once for all, I forbid that sort of sentimentality. If the young man is taught to know his place, he will behave himself; if he behaves himself, I may recommend him to the Grand Duke, perhaps to the King. The Queen gives herself the air of patronising the fine arts. He may eventually become Court-painter. Only mind you keep him in his place.'

To keep him more surely in his place the Baron insisted upon heaping Minna's little neck and arms with all the jewelry of her plain, underbred, *bourgeois* stepmother. Like other proud men he had not been too proud to patch his fortunes with plebeian money, and when he married the ugly daughter of Herr Markworth, the old chicory merchant, he felt that he had accomplished a virtuous action.

Virtuous actions had not been so conspicuous in his life that he should forget this one; and it was said that Miss Markworth was often reminded of it in terms not exactly flattering to her *amour propre*. She revenged herself by studying how to become even more unpleasant than Nature had intended her to be, and it was generally agreed that a large measure of success had crowned her efforts.

Baron Waldstein was, avowedly, that most miserable of beings known as an *homme à bonnes fortunes*. He was a General in the Stolpenstiefel army, Grand Hereditary Stirrup-holder, Chamberlain, Aide-de-camp, and undiscovered titles only know what besides. He was one of the vainest men that ever buckled on a sword or swaggered across a parade-ground. He ogled every woman he met, and said bitter things of such as refused to succumb to his charms. He had been lampooned in the local papers, *persifled* by the Radical comic journal, and still

afforded more scandal to censorious spinsters and waning dowagers than any other person within the Stolpenstiefeler territories. Added to this he was an '*enragierte Preussier*,' and when the question of the Stolpenstiefeler succession was discussed amongst local politicians, his voice was ever loudest in proclaiming that he would die rather than become Austrian. The wags made a picture of him falling on his sword like an antique hero, with the Emperor of Austria rising above and the King of Prussia setting below the horizon, and a whole circle of weeping coryphées, supposed to be portraits of the Stolpenstiefeler *corps de ballet*, lamenting the death of the elderly Alcibiades. Having no sense of humour he felt himself to be grossly outraged by the somewhat vulgar cartoon, and blustered loudly about the fines and imprisonment presently to be inflicted on the offenders by the outraged Serenity of Stolpenstiefel. But that accomplished prince, considering the moment unfavourable to signal severity, preferred to let the matter drop until a more convenient season.

It may be added that Lady Britannia was Baron Waldstein's last vanity.

III.

'WELL, what do you think of it?'

'Am I to speak the truth? Am I to say what I think of it, or what you wish me to think of it?'

'I have no wish on the subject. I want to hear your opinion.'

'My candid opinion? Not a bit of candour and a lump of compliment?'

'No. Just what you think.'

'Well—it is like—but—'

'But—'

'You will not be offended—flattered.'

'Not that,' said Karl Werner, speaking for the first time. 'That is a word that pains the artist; it presupposes an insincerity of soul—it—'

Grace Digby turned and looked at him. Up to that time they had taken no more notice of him than if he had been a lacquey.

'I beg your pardon,' she said, 'idealised—that is the word I should have chosen in the first instance, had I not been thinking more of the model than of the artist.' Her pale beautiful face flushed, and a generous light shone out of her eyes as she spoke.

Karl Werner wished that modern etiquette included the kissing of garment-hems amongst its prescribed formulæ.

But being a brave and ready young fellow, and having seen many English and American ladies in his atelier at Rome, he only acknowledged the amendment with a gesture of satisfaction, such as would have not ill-become the Duke of Stolpenstiefel himself in a gracious hour.

'I see you have not put in the Markworth diamonds yet,' Minna said, shooting a mischievous glance at the young man.

'No. I hope you may still prevail on the Herr Baron to be gracious to me on that point. As it is, I have not been able to do justice to my subject. To paint you in a ball-dress is a violation of the fitness of things. One might as well put a dryad into a Pompadour costume.'

'Papa will never consent to hide the light of the Markworth diamonds under a bushel. Put in the family gems without further protest (for I suppose they will figure as Waldstein jewels in the next generation), and hand me down to posterity adorned with chicory charms.'

There was a bitter lightness in

her tone that caused Grace Digby to press her arm.

Karl looked at her with grave eyes that were tender and pitiful in spite of their gravity.

'Come,' Grace said, drawing her towards the door, 'we are only hindering Herr Werner.'

But once outside, she paused and said, 'Are you not unduly familiar with Mr. Werner, Minna? Does it not strike you that, by adopting this tone, you place him on an equality with yourself?'

'I too familiar with him? O, you sweet prude, you severe saint, you wise matron! Am I not familiar with my dogs? Are you not friendly with your horse? Do you not know that Karl Werner is nothing more to me than the son of my lady's-maid could be? That his father, the brave old forester, is no less a paid servant than any kitchen-wench or scullion in my father's house? That sort of people can be treated with familiarity just because they are at an immeasurable distance from us. They are machines, automatons, with mechanical fingers that work for us. Sexless brainless beings, made for our pleasure and pastime, without passions or feelings of their own; sparing us the trouble and fatigue of consideration. Useful, but conveniently free from all individuality—'

'Herr Werner did not seem to me like that.'

'He has to seem to me like that. Besides, what impropriety could there be in my speaking to him of the chicory and the diamonds? Wealth has a certain aristocracy. A lean spiteful old maid, with a shrewish tongue and a temper to set one's teeth on edge, and gold galore in banks and manufactories, is a very superior person to a young struggling artist, whose father and mother are poor honest people, going their dull humble way with-

out a thought beyond the next parish.'

'Take care, Minna.'

'Of whom? Not of myself. I need no care.'

'Then of him. If I am not mistaken, there lies a great future before that young man. But even in his obscure present he is not a person to be trifled with. Do not trifle with him. Things might turn out so that *you* would not escape scot-free.'

IV.-

'AND you will come to us at Christmas?'

'If John should be well enough.'

'He will be well enough. Grace, I want to ask you something; a favour: and yet I scarcely know. People have talked against me. I have no one I can trust—'

'Not amongst your friends at Stolpenstiefel?'

'My friends!' cried Minna, blazing into a sudden passion of rage and scorn. 'What sort of friends are they? A set of spiteful, envious, canting hypocrites; mean enough to listen to your secrets, and then scandalise you in the next coffee-party they go to. False enough to flatter and fawn upon you, and then betray you to your own father, because their feeble vanity recommends them to obtain his "friendship" at any cost, and sanctifies a faded flirtation on the pretext of a disinterested interest in his disobedient daughter. No! You Englishwomen may have friendships; your interests are wide enough, your country big enough, your lives free enough. But for us, we have, more or less hidden, enmities instead. We have envies, hatreds, malices, and all conceivable and inconceivable uncharitablenesses. We have spites and jealousies and meannesses innumerable. My bosom friend of the hour has gene-

rally betrayed me to the intimate of the moment. No! Heaven preserve me from my friends! I am glad we are not going into Stolpenstiefel for the winter. An extra regiment has been ordered from the frontier. Papa has lent his house to the Colonel. Glad but for one thing—can I trust you, Grace?—but for one thing—'

'And that is—'

'Yes! Eyes like yours never betrayed trust; you are loyal, Lady Britannia. And you can help me if you will.'

'I will if I can. How?'

'As our friends, you and Captain Digby will be asked to Court. You must call on people. Papa will give you the list of the honourabilities ("swells" you call them in your mad ridiculous language). You will know General von Hatten.'

'Yes.'

'And the dear old Generalin. She knew my mother when she was my age. Give her my love, and say—say I never will forget her; and—'

'Après?'

'Well, yes—last, but not least, Grace, you will see their son—Hund. Is it not a quaint old German name? Hund von Hatten! Don't you feel the romance of chivalry floating round you? Isn't there a breath of the Crusades in it? His ancestors must have had a *dogged* courage and faithfulness. It is the good old German blood; *treu und fest*. Look at this old bit of Florentine enamel,' cried Minna, drawing a quaint thin little ring from her bosom, where it hung upon a ribbon. See the dog, and the star of hope above, at which he is so steadfastly gazing. Read the old motto written in tiny letters at the back of the ring—"TUTTO FIDO, TUTTO ARDENTE." And to think that Italian lovers long ago made and

wore it! It might have been Romeo's. Juliet might have hung it at her neck—'

'But Herr von Haften, Minna?'

'Ah, yes! Well, he is coming on leave of absence. He will stay with his parents over Christmas.'

'Am I to give him any message?'

'No. Only if he speaks of me, answer him: say what you like, what you think.'

'Does he know you love him?'

'I never said I did.'

'Not to him, perhaps; but to me you have. Your eyes have said it, your colour has said it—'

'Well, yes, I love him. Look here, Grace. All that is light and vain and frivolous in me is not me. It is something I have put on, as other women heap themselves about with gewgaws and trinkets. All that is sharp and hard and heartless in me is not me, but my life, which has been sharp and hard and loveless. All that is light of speech and scathing of tongue in me is not me; it is the bitterness that never wept itself out on a mother's breast, was never washed with wholesome tears. All that is defiant and daring is not me; it is the shame of shams; it is the protest against pretence; it is a truth that shows falsely. Look at my father, Grace. But he will do anything for you. You must use your influence with him to—'

'You go too far, Minna. You expect too much.'

'No. But he will listen to you. Captain Digby may hear every word you say. Promise me.'

'I cannot promise.'

'Papa insulted the old General von Haften for sending his son into the Austrian service. Then he insulted Hund himself—and you know whoever insults an officer still more grossly insults his uniform, and with that his country, his government, his Emperor. The

code of honour exacts that a man shall doff the uniform he has suffered to be degraded. Fortunately it was not quite so bad as that. Papa was an older man; Hund was in mufti, the affair was patched up; but we were forbidden to speak to each other again, and that was three years ago, and now I am twenty, Grace.'

'Is that the way you Germans love one another?'

'Yes. Much as you English and Irish love one another; much as your American cousins and you love one another.'

'What? You insult me at the same moment that you ask me to do you a favour?'

'It is my wretched tongue. Forgive me, dear Lady Britannia. You are great—you can afford to be magnanimous.'

V.

'ENGLISH or American, it's all the same. The freedom of these women! The Grand Duke has been talking to her for an hour. If she were only good-looking, one might understand the fuss all you men are making about her.'

'Are we?'

'Yes. And though I never repeat the ill-natured things I hear, I have been told that her friendship for that unlucky little Minna von Waldstein is merely a cloak to the serious flirtation she is carrying on with the General.'

'I think, without unduly stretching our Christian charity, we may consider that affection purely platonic.'

'Platonism in love-affairs is not supposed to be the General's weakness. But here comes the goddess of the hour. It is an impertinence for a woman to dress as plainly as that, and an affectation into the bargain.'

'Lady Britannia! she is beautiful!'

It was Karl Werner who spoke.

Baron Waldstein had produced his *protégé*, and had procured him the title of *Hof-maler*. In consideration of this newly-won distinction he was at the Court-ball to-night. The Grand Duke had addressed a few gracious words of recognition as to his past and augury as to his future, and the fortunate young painter had slid into the background, glad to regain his native obscurity. Close beside him stood Hund von Haften, in the superb uniform of the Radetzky Hussars.

As the beautiful Mrs. Digby walked out of the tea-room, attended by one of the Grand Duke's aides-de-camp, a slight flutter passed through the well-dressed mob. Captain von Haften pressed forward and claimed the next dance; Baron Waldstein scowled across the circle at the handsome couple; Karl Werner sighed as he thought of the one woman in the world, and confessed that beauty at its brightest left him cold and comfortless where she was not.

It was to talk of Minna, to ask after Minna—to plan, hope, despair, and be comforted—that Hund von Haften so constantly sought Mrs. Digby's society.

Captain Digby bore things with great equanimity; wondered if all men in love were such confounded pests; hoped matters might soon come to a climax; and, blissfully ignorant of a word of German, was utterly unconscious of the malevolent remarks his apparently accommodating conduct called forth.

'Ah, those English husbands are very convenient,' said an emphatic lady in the crowd buzzing behind the poor young artist. 'Englishmen never fight duels, you know, so no harm can come of things; and then they are all

so absurdly "under the pantoffel" that they dare not say their souls are their own.'

Baron Waldstein, looking on, felt a severe wound to his vanity.

Karl Werner, gazing wearily round, was conscious of a shock to his honour.

VI.

In many places the snow had drifted thirty and forty feet. Out on the high-road gangs of prisoners were at work cutting out huge frozen blocks that were carted away like salt or marble. Where the drift was deepest, the tops of the trees peeped out like hedgerows from above the snow. Vast flocks of birds sat upon the house-roofs, starved into temporary tameness; and out in the silent country all was one monotonous death-shroud.

All that autumn Karl Werner had worked at the portrait of his patron's daughter. All through chill October and dark November Minna had come and gone to the forester's house. Had they been living in town—had the artist been a stranger to them—the Baron and Baroness would certainly have considered some sort of surveillance or chaperonage necessary. But only just across the courtyard at Waldstein, in the forester's house—where the kindly, prudent, motherly Frau Försterin moved heavily to and fro, or sat in the painting-room with her interminable stocking-knitting—no official duenna was necessary.

No paternal representations had been able to instil coldness into Minna's intercourse with her foster-mother. She played round her, teased her, fondled her, provoked her—was sweet and saucy, and cross and coaxing, all in a breath. It was beautiful to see the large placid woman's broad smiles of

delight as her tricky nursing patted and soothed her, fluttered in and out, broke upon them like a ray of sunshine, laughed and sang, and was sweet and gentle with them all.

'*S'ist ein wahrer Engel!*' she would exclaim delightedly.

And Minna—'O dear good people, why am I not always with you? Why are not the people I am with like you? It is nonsense, Mother Lisa, to say we are "*Herrschaft*," and you only humble folk. Whether it is better to live in the forests with the trees and the beautiful wild creatures, or to sit in an old chicory *fabrik*, grinding up roots and counting out your money? You are the real noble people. You are the salt of the earth.' And the wild-eyed fantastic girl would snatch the stocking out of her foster-mother's hand, and jump on her knee just as she had done any time during the last fifteen years.

After that ball at Court, when the young painter had been presented, a change seemed to come over Minna. She was more serious, asked a thousand questions, was anxious and embarrassed, yet with the air of a person who shrinks from speaking the thought that fills the mind. At length one day she said to Karl,

'And my friend, Lady Britannia—did you see her? They tell me she is the rage. How did she look?'

'Beautiful.'

'How coldly you say it!'

'I am cold.'

'Why?'

'Ah, you must not ask me why.'

'Well, it doesn't much matter.

Do you know what the *mauvaises langues* at Stolpenstiefel say? It was written to me by one of my dear kind friends to-day, and some old *klatsch Base* has scribbled the same to my amiable stepmother.'

'How can you give a thought to these unworthinesses? They are too paltry, mean, and contemptible. Why not treat such infinite littlenesses with the scorn they deserve? It pains me to think you entertain things so beneath your notice.'

'Hear his lordly sentiments! As though they had dropped from the beautiful Lady Britannia herself! The lofty scorn, the cold disgust! That is all very well for you demigods, whose heads have already struck the stars; but I am a little human being, with nothing heroic about me, and I am amused to hear what the world says.'

'If you are amused?'

'And you will be amused too. Fancy! they say the reason papa won't return to Waldstein is because he is so desperately in love with Lady Britannia. The fun is, we made her promise to spend Christmas week with us. Fancy the face my stepmother will make! And Mrs. Digby's mild unconsciousness! But you don't laugh. I thought you admired my English friend.'

'I admire, but do not like her.'

'Because of papa? And Minna turned her head back and laughed like a provoking child.

'That is all nonsense!'

'Of course it is "too paltry, mean, and contemptible," eh?—"infinite littlenesses," *n'est-ce pas*, infinitely beneath my notice?'

'But some things are not beneath notice, though it may pain one to notice them. If you breathe on a looking-glass, its polished surface will be obscured; damp tarnishes silver; pitch defiles. It is not to such puerile and unbecoming gossip as that which your friends retail I should pay attention. The world—your world—says bitter and scandalous things of Mrs. Digby in connection with a young empty-headed fool—a

dandy captain of Hussars, called Hund von Haften.'

A large brush full of paint was dragged across Karl Werner's face. Minna's flaming green eyes glared at him from behind the insult; he heard the words,

'You lie!'

Wiping the bar of black paint from his mouth, he said calmly,

'Which is it you love? The man or the woman?'

'Both.'

'If the woman proves false, you will still love the man?'

'Yes.'

'But if the man proves false, you will hate the woman?'

'Yes.'

'But your love for the man will be killed?'

'I shall be killed. Pride will be dead in me—faith, loving-kindness. I may live in the flesh, but I shall be dead in the spirit.'

'No; you will only be free.'

'What could I do with my freedom?'

'Give it away. If ever the time comes, I will tell you how—to whom. Until then, keep it. It is a great gift to give. It is a grand card to play. So long as you hold it, life is not lost.'

VII.

No lover is so *exigeant* as an elderly lover. His vanity is involved in the matter; and no passion is so relentless as vanity.

Baron Waldstein was delighted when his devotion to the beautiful Mrs. Digby became town-talk. The more people chattered, the higher he held his head, the tighter he buckled his waist, the more he trimmed his moustaches and turned out his toes.

But when people proceeded to cackle about Hund von Haften's *grande passion*, the General's elation began to subside.

Men and women, looking on (German men and German women, but more particularly German women), could not understand that Mrs. Digby was utterly indifferent alike to the admiration and the cackle—that she took the admiration as her due, a tribute to which she had been accustomed all her life, and that the gossip ran on altogether too low a level to reach her ears; that she loved her husband more than she loved any one else in the world, her beautiful self included, and that Jack Digby did not so much as own that there were any other women about. A more devoted couple never existed, nor could a freer or more liberal union be desired by the most exorbitant soul. Captain Digby felt no surprise that other men admired a woman he himself admired so entirely. Grace Digby did not expect every man to be as perfect as Jack, but nevertheless went through life smiling at its pleasures and follies, ready to take the world as it wagged.

It may be believed that Baron Waldstein did not generally love Captain von Haften in those days. He watched him with angry jealous eyes. He watched Grace too. He was miserable if a day passed without his being joked about his flame.

A fortnight before Christmas he reminded Mrs. Digby of her promise to spend a week with them at Waldstein. She at once agreed to go. He asked if there was anything he could do for her. Yes; there was one thing, but perhaps he would not do it? Not do it? He swore to do, to suffer, anything she might ask. She smiled, and said she would remind him of his promise at Waldstein.

Karl, in his silent studio, worked out a wild future and watched Minna. Minna bided her time.

The preparations for the Christmas festivities went on busily in kitchen and guest-chamber. Ten days before the festival, Baron Waldstein, looking very much as though he had opened the oyster-shell with his sword, alighted in radiant triumph at his ancestral hall.

VIII.

'You promise me, on your word as a gentleman, on the honour of your sword?'

'I promise.' And Baron Waldstein kissed Grace Digby's hand.

Delighted to get rid of what his elderly vanity had been pleased to call a 'rival,' he had almost fallen at Mrs. Digby's feet when she had entreated him to view, with a friendlier eye than he had hitherto done, Hund von Haften's suit for his daughter's hand. He wondered now why he had ever objected to the young man as a son-in-law. Political prejudices vanished like the morning mist, and a rose-coloured future began to dawn on the horizon of the elderly military Adonis.

'And I may write to him? And you will let me tell Minna? It will be my Christmas gift to her.'

'Everything shall be as you wish.'

But before Grace told Minna, before she wrote to Hund von Haften, she had a word to say to her capricious little friend.

Her large brown eyes had looked into the studio, and seen things there that others could not see.

Minna had met her without any of her former warmth. The old fond admiration, the mock title of *Lady Britannia*, were heard no more. The girl looked wan and sallow, her great hazel-green eyes cold and harsh. Her face seemed as though all light and colour had been drawn out of it. It was like

a mask of stone with a glittering shifting light behind.

Karl had thrown over his former friends.

Asked of some red-hot young Radicals to draw a wicked cartoon for their republican paper, he had refused with a sternness that roused their indignation. How could he insult his Minna's father? How could he outrage and hold up to ridicule the class to which she belonged? Let the howling fools call him a renegade; what matter so long as he earned a future that should set him far above their petty interests and abject aims, that would seat him amongst the gods? A man who was stronger than the Fates, since he had conquered them.

'Minna, how do you stand with Karl Werner?'

'He is my foster-brother.'

'He is your lover.'

'I do not say so.'

'But I do. And I say more. You told me something of another lover. You gave me to understand that you returned his love.'

Minna's face flushed a deep passionate red. This woman, who had shamelessly stolen her lover from her, had now the effrontery to refer to him.

'Well, I have something to tell you about him. He is, no doubt, a gallant young gentleman, pleasant, amiable, accomplished, but—he is nothing more; he can and will be nothing more. You see him at his best. There are no great possibilities in his future. He will do his duty, and keep his sword and his honour bright, but he will never lead a forlorn hope.'

Silence.

'But near to you, within your grasp, at your feet, in the palm of your hand—your fingers have only to close upon it—a great heart lies; genius waits; a grand future sleeps. Your touch can wake the

dormant spark to life. Dare to be true to yourself. Have the courage of your convictions. Stoop, and, when you rise, you will rise higher than you ever rose before; higher than you ever in your wildest thought dreamed to rise; you will float, you will soar, and your love will have kissed the sleeping genius into life.'

She looked beautiful in this prophetic mood, pleading (as she thought) with Minna for her own soul.

'You are an admirable advocate,' the girl answered coldly. 'The thing is impossible.'

'Impossible, because of social rank, of conventional prejudice? Be true to yourself, dear Minna!'

'Impossible, because I love another man. The man your vanity has sought to steal from me.'

'The man my friendship has won for you—that is my *Christ-kindchen* to you, Minna. Your father consents to your betrothal; I write by to-night's post. Hund von Haften will be here to-morrow!'

IX.

IN the great *Ahnen-saal* at Waldstein a hundred tapers were burning. Costly and homely gifts lay spread on tables; the pastor and his buxom daughter, the forester and his homely spouse, the secretary and his numerous olive-branches, all the servants and dependents on the estate, were gathered together, according to immemorial custom, in honour of the Christmas-tree.

At the upper end of the hall stood Baron Waldstein surrounded by his family and guests. Never had he been so condescending, fluent, and gracious. At the lower end of the hall Minna's portrait, wreathed in evergreens, smiled out at the wondering women and children.

For each one an appropriate gift had been provided. The good people must not be detained long, since in every cottage and farm other trees were waiting to be lighted up, and old Father Christmas was holding forth liberal hands on all sides. Karl Werner's eyes moved from the portrait to Minna; from Minna back to the portrait. Never had she looked so brilliant, strange, unlike other flesh-and-blood women. Mrs. Digby, in a long white robe, crowned with holly, stood out like a winter-angel from the confused group at the top of the hall.

It was with satisfaction that Werner recognised Captain von Haften's presence. Minna would see with her own eyes the truth of all he had told her as to Mrs. Digby's flirtation with her quondam lover. She had been too busy since the arrival of their guests to come across to the forester's house, and for his part he had made no inquiries as to what visitors were expected at the Castle. He was therefore quite unprepared for the young warrior's apparition. Preoccupied by his ambition, inspired by his love, fulfilled by his art, his unpractical brain all absorbed with visions of possible future glory and love, and his proud rebellious heart full of the joy of conflict, the young artist walked to and fro like one in a dream, transfigured, rapt.

The picture was his Christmas gift to Minna. He had told her so. The formula of presenting it to the Baron must be gone through, he said, like any other piece of conventional propriety. But in her heart of hearts she would know that he dedicated his work, his labour of love, his best art, to her; that it was hers only. And Minna's wounded vanity had found balm and consolation in this rapture of devotion.

As he looked at the picture now, and from the picture back to Minna,

he told himself that he had given her something that no one else could give her. They might adorn her with jewels, worry her with nicknacks, smother her with finery, but he had given her of his best—of his soul and his heart, of his blood and his brains, of his past and his future. He had given her to herself as Love had divined and Art had expressed her. His soul had sought out hers, had caught its essence, and fixed it in eloquent silence on the mute canvas. Wild visions of the days when that picture would hang upon the walls of a room where they would sit together, in the calm security of a conquered fate, and look back soothed and smiling upon the history of their stormy love, flitted across his restless brain. He could endure to be separated from her now. He held fate in the palm of his hand, and felt within him the power to rise above and conquer the world. Rather than that picture—the heart of his heart, the love of his love, the brain of his brain—should pass into other hands, he would destroy it. Then at least no vulgar eye or hand would have profaned its beauty or sullied its secret meaning.

The Baron had just presented a magnificent rifle to Karl Werner. 'I know of no more appropriate gift for a forester's son,' he said, with that glib aptitude forepuphuism learned so readily in courts.

Karl Werner took it and bowed. He felt like a young knight might do who has won his spurs.

As his hand glided across the smooth stock, felt the polished steel of the trigger, and weighed the weapon with the appreciative pleasure of a connoisseur, the thought ran through him like an electric shock that he held life and death in his hands. He could create and he could destroy. The godlike attributes were his. He was in-

toxicated by some strange spirit-drink, and the ordinary things of life, the common ways of men, the beaten-out phrases of existence found no place in his mind.

As in a trance, he was aware of some movement at the upper end of the hall. He saw Captain von Haften bowing over the white hand of the beautiful winter-angel. He saw Minna's wild glittering eyes, with the shifting light in them he had so often sought to catch.

It did not trouble him that their wandering will-o'-the-wisp light did not rest on him.

'And now, my friends,' Baron Waldstein said, speaking in a louder voice, so that there was an immediate hush in the room, 'I must ask you all for something in return. Your good wishes for my daughter and future son-in-law. Three cheers for the bride and bridegroom!'

'Du lieber Gott! Das wird ein schönes Paar geben!' exclaimed the tender-hearted Frau Försterin, as she crossed the courtyard with her husband and son. 'I shall see the children, perhaps even the children's children, of our gracious Fräulein!'

* * * * *

Christmas-day dawned bright and cloudless. The dying year slept peacefully in its winding-sheet. In the *Ahnen-saal* stood a frame without a picture.

And in the heart of the dark pine-woods a young man lay, his rifle beside him, his fair head pillowed on the frozen snow. The sharply cut lips were firmly set, but the broad white brow was serene and placid. His spotless pillow was stained by a crimson witness, yet a strange triumphant smile was fixed in the sightless far-seeing eyes, that were looking across time into eternity.

* The words 'Braut und Bräutigam' are only applied to betrothed couples in Germany.

NEW FEATURE IN 'LONDON SOCIETY' FOR 1878.

It has been well said that it is doing a real service to humanity *when one helps to amuse it innocently*, and that those wisecrackers know very little of SOCIETY and its best workers who think we can get on in our duties without a due share of mental recreation.

Perhaps one of the most innocent and agreeable fashions of the day is the guessing of ACROSTICS. Old and young can join in it, and enjoy it heartily. It has, in fact, become a recognised source of amusement 'in the hours of relaxation.' As such it falls specially within the scope of LONDON SOCIETY.

Accordingly in the coming year we shall try, by means of this pleasant pastime, to sharpen our readers' wits, stimulate their memory, and perhaps cause them to enlarge or verify their reading.

We shall publish an ACROSTIC every month as puzzling as we can invent. And as a reward for cleverness and perseverance in guessing them, certain *Prizes in Money* will be given, in conformity with the Rules here laid down.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

ANSWER TO No. I. (TRIPLE ACROSTIC),

Which appeared in the Christmas and December Numbers of 'London Society.'

| | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. C | U | M | M | I | N | G |
| 2. H | A | R | I | N | G | R |
| 3. R | O | S | S | E | | |
| 4. I | N | D | E | F | A | T |
| 5. S | K | I | L | L | E | T |
| 6. T | U | R | D | E | T | A |
| 7. M | A | T | I | N | | |
| 8. A | C | C | O | M | M | O |
| 9. S | Y | M | P | L | E | S |

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. R. Gordon Cumming, the lion-hunter. 3. Lord Rosse—family name, Parsons. 5. *Othello*, act 1. scene III.: 'Let housewives make a skillet of my helm.' 6. Strabo deems their territory, which was in Spain, the Elysian Fields of Homer. 9. The 'Dæmons.' These two islands were anciently called Cyanese, 'dark,' but by Byron 'the blue Symplegades.'

Correct solutions to the above acrostic have been received from A Guernseyite, Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Ash, Beatrice W., Bon Gaultier, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice,

C. O. M., Croydon Cat, Elaine, Elisha, Excelsior Jack, General Buncombe, Gimlet-Eye, Hampton Courtier, Harrow Road West, Incoherent, Kanitbeko, Kremlin, Laddie, Manus O'Toole, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo, Nil Desperandum, Non sine gloria, No. 2, Old Log, Old Prose, Patty Probity, Pud, Puss, Racer, Roe, Shaitân, The Boro-goves, The Snark, Tory, Ulverston, V. Cello, Verulam, Wee Plots, and Welsh Rabbit—48 correct, and 85 incorrect : 133 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The question has been asked by several solvers, 'Are alternative words allowed in doubtful cases?' To this it is replied, that the 'lights' of the acrostics will, it is hoped, be so self-evident when they are discovered, that alternative words will be unnecessary. We trust, therefore, correspondents will send only one word for each 'light.'

Araba.—Arrangements are made for the acrostics for the year.

Try.—Certainly; every 'light' should be given.

Beatrice W.—Your full name and address will be required only if you are successful in winning a prize.

Harrow Road West.—The time for sending in answers cannot be extended.

Le Lys.—1. See the explanatory notice in small type to the Triple Acrostic in the December Number. The acrostic in the present Number is Double, having initials and finals only for the chief words. 2. See above. 3. No; credit will not be given unless the acrostic is solved in its entirety.

Sphinx.—If your copy of *London Society* is forwarded as soon as published, you will have time to answer the acrostic by the specified time.

No. II.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THIS to last year. To you, too, this I say,
Reader, on Christmas or on New Year's day.

I.

Doubtless Belinda wore it ; so
Maids made and did it long ago.

II.

An only one, and always in disgrace ;
Often in hand, but never out of place.

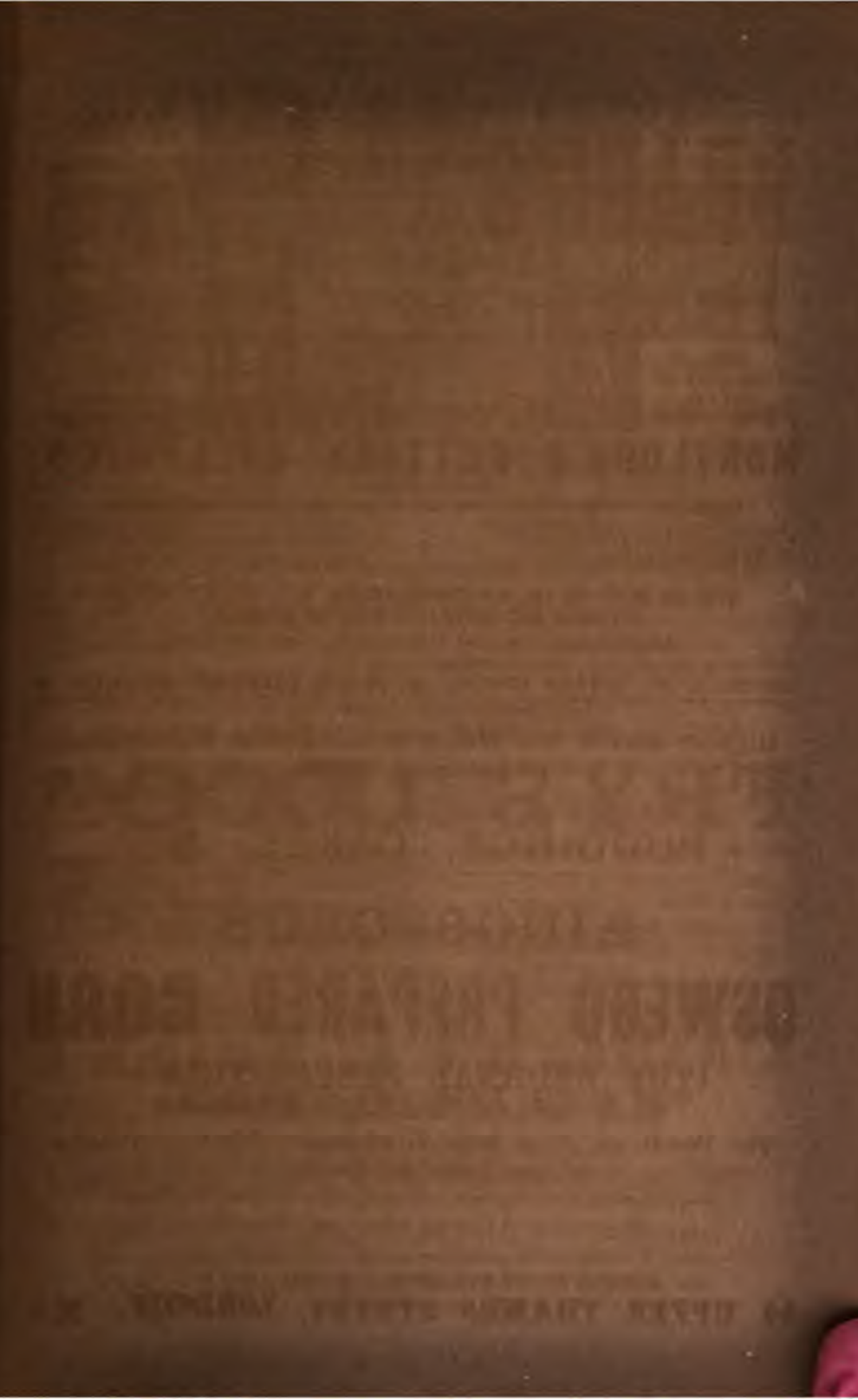
III.

Or he, or she, if this you be,
You must be this, then, to some other.
When this you do 'tis done to you ;
And being one you have another.

IV.

Dear old girls, it is hard ; but assuage
Your rage, and don't make it change places :
Bad enough in your teeth at your age ;
I engage 'twould be worse in your faces. THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the February Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by Jan. 10th.



LONDON SOCIETY.

FEBRUARY 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER IV.

SENSE, OR SENSIBILITY ?

WHEN Cressida, that Saturday evening, had suddenly cut short Norbert's speeches and parted from him at the gate, she had been actuated by a generous impulse, a sense that a transient weakness was leading her on to respond where she ought to have been dumb, and that a moment which held but the power for petty gratification or mortification to herself was fraught with vital import to her companion.

Therefore, as the loyal friend of his which she professed and believed herself to be, she was bound in honour not to trifle now. No word or look of hers could be trifling in its effect upon him at that crisis. If she has a conscience she must shrink from throwing random phrases about, since carry momentous weight they do, whether she will or no.

Cressida's impulses were for the most part good and generous, until they were corrected by her better judgment, or what took the form of that angel of light.

It was cool reflection that had decided her *not* to shirk the opportunity offered on the morrow

for a second interview, though she had scarcely looked on to its full result.

That Norbert idolised her in secret was an old story, so familiar to her mind as to have bred there, if not contempt, at least a sort of smiling indifference. It had needed the threatened blotting out of him from the everyday book of her life to reveal to her how much she liked him, or, at least, those settled perennial attentions of his, her sweet and sure income from his ideal, chivalrous heart-homage. How different from Halliday's carefully qualified admiration, which went along with a disparagement of her whole character, and wounded her pride in the same measure as it flattered her vanity ! The consciousness that he, in judging her, put her personal charms first and the rest nowhere, irritated her to the point of making her vehemently resent her own yearning desire for an approach, of any sort, from him.

Cressida—a most unusual thing with her—was extremely absent that evening. Fortunately Mr. Landon, sleepy after his charity sermon, did not notice her drop the sugar into the cream-jug, fling her handkerchief into the

waste-paper basket, and pocket the fragments of an old newspaper, in her preoccupation. In truth, she was a little frightened at the thought of the advance she had made, and had one or two twinges of shame. She had held out to Norbert a morsel of encouragement, stopped short of committing herself irrevocably in his favour, though selfishly loth to throw him overboard altogether and let him espouse St. Cecilia, of whose influence she was more jealous than she was aware of. Not but what she felt sure that if it came to a choice, Norbert would unhesitatingly sacrifice St. Cecilia to herself.

For a moment her conduct did strike her as horribly cold-blooded; then she reflected that she really did not know but what she might make up her mind to accept Norbert in time. Of all her pretenders he was the one to whom there were fewest objections; and that night she was careful to go over in her mind all the arguments in his favour, and came to the conclusion that they were nearly unanswerable. In marrying him she would please everybody, notably her father, who was not a little embarrassed by his rôle of he-dragon guarding so indiscriminately sought-after a young lady, a part he was about as qualified to fill as to make her bonnets.

His curates were always proposing for her, anonymous admirers sending her bonbons and flowers. The responsibility of too charming a daughter becomes irksome for a country clergyman; and Mr. Landon would have been overjoyed to see her married to Norbert, of whom he had a high opinion, chiefly because he was so unlike 'the young men of the present day'—men of Halliday's stamp, principally known to the good clergyman through their

maiden articles in magazines, and whose intrepid speculations on social subjects so appalled Mr. Landon that he refused to believe but that their private characters must be equally at variance with his own ideas of morality. Colonel Alleyne would be pleased. Cressida always got on perfectly well with the Tsar. She had never had her nerves spoilt by being cowed in her early days; and thus, unlike his own children, could look him fearlessly in the face, yet without defiance; answer him gracefully, naturally, cheerfully; and was never known to have evoked a cross word or look from him.

Mr. Marriott would be delighted. He was rich, but *bourgeois*, his wife the same. Cressida was well connected, and, whether innate or inherited, had a nameless ease and grace of manner that the Marriott girls lacked, envied, and strove wildly and vainly to imitate. The next best thing for them would be to import a specimen into the family. Ask Norbert if *he* would be happy. O, she would please everybody. Only—would she please herself?

Why not? Norbert and she sympathised on most points; and when they differed she generally succeeded in bringing him round to her views in the end. Marble to others, he was wax to her; she liked him for that. In short, the pros were everywhere, and the cons nowhere.

There was, to be sure, that dream on the Alp; but if, in the course of the weeks that followed Norbert's return to London, her heart reverted to it oftener than ever, now she was on the verge of renouncing it, her head seemed more and more to harp on the idea that it was far removed and distinctly opposed to all that was positive and tangible in her life.

Well, yes; she *had* gone so far as to throw herself into the part of the heroine of a possible romance; but that was during a spell of illusion, which magnified trifling pleasures and pains. What were all those feverish days, wakeful nights, those flashes of feeling of Juliet-like devotion, of Heloisian soul-abandonment, but a kind of pageantry of emotion one were a fool to put trust in? Is not poetry, after all, like opium, enervating in its effect, distorting our views of people and circumstances, and therefore unfitting us to deal with them? Read Byron and Shelley and Musset and Heine, if you must, for a luxury, as you might go to see a *féerie*, but woe to you if you attempt to act in everyday life on the utterances of their transcendental cant. That was Elise's creed. The interval during which Cressida had half doubted its truth appeared to her now as a fast-fading hallucination, and her clinging to the reminiscence as the height of silly sentimentalism. Her very relation to Halliday during their brief acquaintance had, she said to herself, been a false one. The roof of a *chdlet* inn levels all—he forgot he was poor, she that she was ambitious. Differences of worldly interest were suspended; and this had misled her into almost forgetting them. But that these differences were artificial and subordinate, and that the doing away with them was a restoration of things to their natural starting-point,—this, the peg to which she should have clung for salvation, was beyond her range, alas; though even now that the differences were back in their places again, she had not silenced her longing to renew that link—the one force strong enough to prevent an irrevocable entanglement with Norbert. But her whole in-

tercourse with Halliday seemed to have suddenly evaporated, as such acquaintances do. One hope she had. An old promise from Elise de Saumarez to ask Cressida to stay with her during the first fortnight in December was still unfulfilled. The next six weeks could hardly fail to bring a definite invitation, and there, in London, she would be sure to hear news of Halliday—probably to meet him, as she knew he often came to see Elise in Mayfair.

Week after week went by, and Cressida was still holding on to this chance as of something to save her from herself. Meanwhile Norbert's letters were difficult to answer. As usual, they ran on every subject sooner than that nearest his heart. Jocular sometimes, describing his lodgings, his singularly unvaried bachelor life, his banking experiences; they fell into bitterness here and there when anything recalled the subject of music discarded; and through all there pierced the restlessness of an eternally crossed, hampered, tormented, but passionately self-asserting individuality.

Cressida answered regularly,—kindly and considerably ignoring the petition that she well knew underlay all these matter-of-fact missives. She began to dread them, because they did move her, and seemed to enlist her better feelings on the same side with that self-interest luring her on to a step she knew all the while to be false.

One morning the long-delayed letter in Elise's hand arrived. Cressida blushed at herself for the ridiculous eagerness with which she seized and tore it open.

‘My poor little Mouse,—“Man appoints, Heaven disappoints,” is the truest version that I know of the favourite proverb. As I am

going to disappoint you, you might jump to the supposition that I wished to pass myself off as Heaven in this instance. Pray do not attribute such vainglorious sentiments to your luckless friend, who, never too angelical, is less able than usual to make to herself any illusions whatever on the subject of wings, having for the last three weeks been imprisoned in one room, helpless and a fixture.

'The disposing and disappointing Heaven in England means generally the weather. Last Monday three weeks the temperature fell twenty degrees in a few hours. You may perhaps recollect it; or perhaps, like other things, the thermometer is more regular in its habits at Fernswold than in our modern Babylon. For my sins, I chanced to be driving out; I caught a chill, and, if the next world had had the smallest inclination to undertake me, here, I believe, was its opportunity. It is perfectly clear now that the gods will have nothing to say to me. In spite of the three doctors called in to complete the work of destruction, I am getting round again. But after this I need scarcely add that I shall have to postpone indefinitely the pleasure of seeing you here. My remains are to be taken to Brighton as soon as they can stir—there to recruit as best they may—and I am not to return to town this winter.

'Yours, in despair,

'ELISE DE SAUMAREZ.'

'P.S.—News. Stephen Halliday is starting for Egypt almost immediately. He wrote me a farewell letter yesterday. He has found a travelling pupil, who wants a temporal pastor and master; and S. H. is to shepherd him up the Nile.'

Again Cressida felt out of patience with herself for being so

cruelly disappointed by this letter. She called herself by every uncomplimentary name she could think of, as she walked up and down the room trying to lecture herself out of this unreasonable heart-sinking. The news was only a relentless confirmation of her own conviction—the wisdom that said that nobody's heart was worth much. Had she after all expected Stephen Halliday's to prove an exception?

An hour after she was surprised to find another note lying on the table, which in her agitation she had overlooked. It was in Fan's hand, and the contents were as follows:

'Own dear Cressida,—I want to see you instantanè. Be so obliging as to meet me at the obelisk, Monks' Orchard, at twelve. I'll be there anyhow, on the chance.

'Yours,

'FAN.'

The little distraction was a relief. She took out her watch; there was still time to get to the rendezvous by noon. Glad to shirk thought, she hastened out.

The obelisk was a white marble erection in the heart of the park attached to Monks' Orchard. It had been raised by an eccentric proprietor, long deceased, and a certain mystery hung about his object in putting it there. Some said it was to commemorate the planting of a cedar of Lebanon that stood hard by, and which he commended to the care of his posterity in some lines inscribed on the marble; but sensational stories were not wanting, and there was a Mrs. Kennedy's ghost that walked there after dark. It was a singular if not a lovely object, gleaming like a tombstone through the woods. It was four years since the house had had a tenant; and Cressida and the Alleynea, being on

good terms with the lodge-keepers and Mr. Kennedy's steward, were free to wander about the park as they chose—a permission of which they availed themselves liberally.

Cressida slowly went on her way through the leafless woods till she came within sight of the fir-mount where the obelisk stood. There was Fan reclined under the cedar, already on the watch for her, in her favourite attitude—leaning on her elbows, with her hands thrust through her hair. Cressida always enjoyed the sight of that girl. The last year they had become attached friends. With Fan she had not a single association of any sort that was not perfectly agreeable, which was not often the case between her and her acquaintances. If they were men, they were lamentably apt to begin, and almost certain to end, by making love to her with more or less earnest. If they were women, jealousy was fated to come into play, sooner or later, on one side or the other; but Fan's profound and sincere admiration for her friend seemed to put envy or emulation out of the question. That a man of taste must fall in love with Cressida, Fan recognised as a law of the Medes and Persians.

It was natural that Cressida should be confidential even about her lovers—Norbert alone excepted—to this girl, who, strange to say, never thought of coveting for herself this widely attractive power. If Fan did not like people, she did not care if they liked her or not.

Cressida seated herself on the rough wooden bench under the cedar, facing the obelisk. Fan lay stretched at her feet on a tuft of heather, building a nondescript edifice with fir-cones. Though in November, it was perfectly warm and mild, like a sunless summer's day. The squirrels were trotting

about in the woods around, crackling among the dead leaves and fallen chestnuts. There were songsters about, too—fieldfares in flocks, as if holding council before migrating; blue-tits were conspicuous on the boughs of the birches and ash-trees, their bright plumage glistening curiously amid the bare twigs.

'Jolly,' said Fan lazily, and shutting her eyes; 'subject for Norbert's next composition, "*Autumn Symphony*," to Monks' Orchard in November; and I shall insist on his introducing the scream of the jay and the caw of the rooks. Cressida, those wretched Greeks are supposed to have been ahead of us in everything; but do you believe that they—for all their oreads and dryads and fauns and satyrs that grew wild in their country—ever had the faintest idea of anything that came up to an English wood?'

'I don't know,' said Cressida; 'but I think theirs must have been more lively with all that large and picturesque population.'

'I love Mr. Kennedy,' continued Fan unheeding; 'it was very disinterested of him to marry into confectionery and exile himself afterwards, so that we come in, practically, for the reversion of the estate of his fathers.'

Fan was a dreadful little optimist. It had never occurred to Cressida to view Tom Kennedy's proceedings in this amiable light. Fan, however, had always persisted that his absenteeism, at least, should be counted unto him for righteousness.

'All this while I'm forgetting my news,' she ejaculated presently.

'What news?'

'Mine is that I heard this morning from Norbert.'

So had Cressida. She did not mention it, but merely asked,

'What does he say to you?'

'Wants me to come up and stay with him,' said Fan; 'and, what's more to the purpose, I mean to go. Uncle Marriott gives a big spread in a week or two—he always does on his wedding-day. (If I ever marry, Cressida, it shall be on the 29th of February, so as not to be bothered with more anniversaries than can be avoided.) Norbert is always asked to bring a sister to this hymeneal feast. It's a sort of triennial outing that we get. Millie and Jeanie have had their turns—it's mine now.'

Cressida said, 'How delightful! listlessly; for she was not going.

Fan made a wry face. 'Well, it's a famous excuse for my going to stay with Norbert, which otherwise papa would object to, and there would be a row. But I suppose he thinks a silver wedding must be an improving, sobering spectacle. And he's always glad for us to see something of the Marriotts, though I can't say he sets us an example—for he takes care never to cross their threshold if he can help it, and he and uncle can never meet without a scrimmage about politics or something. But whenever Norbert and I get together, he scents mischief, and no wonder—for I always did, and I always shall do, my Sunday best to brew it.'

'What mischief?'

'Musical mischief,' said Fan, nodding sagely, and flinging back her head on the moss, staring attentively up at the sky, as if it were a mariner's compass to tell her how to steer. 'O Cressida,' she exclaimed vehemently, 'he must give up that—that infernal bank, before it's dilapidated his health and spirit past restoration. No one would believe how hopelessly miserable it makes him. But I know it—understand it too. Why, he'd be happier as a street-piper, wandering through the country.'

Cressida sighed impatiently. 'Yes, Fan; one may talk so, but the realities of life are so hard.'

'Wickedly hard; but that's what I mean,' quoth Fan, half starting up. 'Why, even animals and vegetables are better off; for they haven't got to fight for their natural sphere. Ducks want ponds, woodpeckers trees, seaweeds salt-water, bees and butterflies flowers to suck; and what they want they get.'

'I suppose they couldn't live at all out of their element, and we can.'

'So much the worse for us,' said Fan grimly. 'A pretty sort of existence it is. Norbert living for the bank is like a duck on a sofa, a woodpecker in a Middle-class schoolroom, a seaweed on Stonehenge, a bee or a butterfly in church.'

'I know,' she said helplessly, but wishing the girl would hold her tongue.

'If he'd only a weak turn for the thing,' pursued Fan, who was never tired of holding forth on this subject, 'it wouldn't matter much. There are lots of nondescript young men who will never be more than middling in whatever they put their hand to, and who may tag rhymes, write namby-pamby songs, and daub water-colours in their leisure hours, and make very good banking-clerks; but with a boy with so strong a bent as Norbert's, and when everything's so simple, I call it legalised manslaughter to sap and undermine his energies by forcing him into a way of life he cannot bear—a kind of treadmill. Cressida, are parents quite mad, or only quite blind?'

Cressida laughed uncomfortably; Fan's tirade awoke in her a conscientious pang.

'But I have my own plan,' pursued the girl steadily. 'When I'm a year or two older, I shall be

able to help him more. *I'm* not going to be a no-account girl, like Jeanie and Millie, good for a victim or a martyr only, and a mere dummy when it comes to action. *I* want to be able to back him up and be useful to him when he makes up his mind to cut banking and study for the musical profession. Of course, *I* don't know yet what *I* can do; but, at all events, he sha'n't be single-handed, or feel himself alone in the world and against the world, when he takes that fresh start.'

'Are you quite sure that that is what he would choose?' said Cressida suddenly.

Fan stared up at her in amazement. 'Ask me if *I* am sure that the sun will rise to-morrow, and in the east, not west.'

Cressida's eyes fell. Probably Fan was in the right, she thought, with a flash of bitterness. Even Norbert did not care for her supremely, no more than Halliday. The one prefers the Nile and the Pyramids, the other Leipzig and his pianoforte. Love paramount indeed! It is fiction that makes a king of him. How small and despicable is his empire out of print!

'And *I* know too,' continued Fan, changing her tone, and speaking with great earnestness, 'that it's a more serious matter than anybody chooses to think. It's beginning to tell upon Norbert already. Five years more of this, and *I'm* not sure that he'll be fit for anything particular; his life-chance will be lost, and there we shall have him a regular breakdown, a social failure, if ever there was one. Talk of a ruinous marriage, Cressida; it must be every bit as bad for a man to be at odds with a profession that he's tied to, as for a woman to be married to a husband she detests.'

'Perhaps it may be.'

'When you go up to town,

Cressida, you must come to see Norbert and me, and we'll talk it out, all three together. The Marriotts know you're coming, and mean to ask you to their spread; *I* told them you would be staying with Mrs. de Saumarez.'

'But *I'm* not going at all,' said Cressida, sighing. 'I've just heard from Mrs. de Saumarez that she can't have me. She's ill, and leaving town.'

'Stupid woman!' said Fan. 'What on earth does she choose this time to be ill for?'

Cressida laughed. 'No doubt she has her reasons.'

Fan watched her, fancying she had the key to that wistful, enigmatical expression. 'Has anything been heard of Mr. Halliday?' she asked gently. Cressida had spoken of him to her—hinted at that fragment of romance.

'No—that is, yes,' returned Cressida. 'He's going, or gone, to the East—Egypt. Good-bye!' she added, with an expressive little motion of her lips.

'Egypt!' But people come back from Egypt. He may turn up again soon,' observed Fan practically.

'Or he mayn't,' said Cressida despondingly. 'He may take a fancy to Eastern life; settle there; turn sugar-boiler, or railway-contractor, or Pasha, or marry some Pharaoh's daughter.'

'Is it like him?'

'O, *I* don't know. It's like him to go—like him to forget—the rest follows as a matter of course. But don't you think me a frivolous goose, Fan, for making so much of these things?'

'No,' said Fan doubtfully; 'or, at any rate, men seem to make too little of them, and can anything be more silly than that? A man who chooses a wife because he thinks she will look well at the top of a table, or her hair matches

his new chintz, or for some other Daniel-come-to-judgment like reason for choosing her rather than any one else he could marry, seems to me to fall into as big a blunder as even a man can make. Of course, there are men and men. Some don't see the differences in girls, or that one can be much more worth caring for than another—just as there are men to whom all professions come alike. But then there are others—and Norbert's one—to whom it makes the difference between flying colours or—smash.'

Cressida scarcely heard. She was pondering vaguely on the threads, so many and so involved, out of which *her* future was weaving itself. Time was getting on, and the two girls had to leave their retreat and saunter back through the Monks' Orchard woods. They parted at the lodge, Fan flinging out a random prophecy that they would meet somehow, after all, in town.

The Marriottes' invitation to the wedding-feast reached Cressida in due time, and she wrote a very pretty little note, declining it with marked regret. It was dashed off without any conscious design or under-thought, posted, and she stopped her ears to conjectures as to what the result might be.

Men of simple single natures like Norbert do find satisfaction possible here below when circumstances are in harmony with their temperament; while others, more complicated, are doomed ever to have one want unsupplied. On the other hand, the former are far worse off if the tide of events strands them on some alien shore. No colonists they; self-repression wears them out. Fan was not far wrong in her ultimatum.

Norbert's spirits had sunk considerably these last weeks. Cressi-

da's letters were sweetly equivocal, his hopes the frailest and most intangible stuff. So much was plain and pronounced, that his present occupation was hateful to him; and unless it could become the means to an end, an end so desired and desirable as to glorify the means, could never be anything else.

Fan's arrival did him good. It was a mental tonic and astringent. They had a glorious evening of unrestrained talk together. Her sanguine spirits and resolute straightforward ways had a rousing effect on her brother. Child though she was, she had a wonderful way of simplifying things to him. The next night they went off to a concert. Both returned overflowing with musical enthusiasm, and Norbert with musical ideas. His earliest love was asserting her empire, as if with a last crowning effort to master him. He could no longer hold in that night, but must tell Fan of Professor Matthison's offer, which had been lately repeated, and presingly.

Fan was transported with delight. To go or not to go was, in her idea, no question at all. She took Norbert's yes for granted, and his revelation to her as that of a fixed and irrevocable move. At the same time, with that *esprit positif* which runs through the very romance of the rising generation, she immediately set about to consider ways and means.

They two sat up till the small hours discussing. The next day Fan searched through half a dozen foreign libraries for books about Leipzig, its Conservatoire, its professors, and the prices of board and lodging there; and elaborate calculations were made as to how Norbert could live on a trifle a day. Fan's unselfish delight in the scheme had revived and trebled his own.

'May I tell Cressida?' she asked innocently.

Norbert started—just as Cressida had done when Fan, as they sat in the wood, had suddenly spoken of Halliday—but she was too engrossed in the matter at heart and in hand to be observant.

'Not yet,' he stammered. 'I—I'd rather say something about it to her myself.'

Norbert was late at his post that morning and the next; out of sorts and inattentive besides. Mr. Marriott, who noticed it, wondered despondingly if ever anything would turn his dreamy, listless, silent young nephew into the vigilant, active, fluent, business-man he desired to see in him.

At lunch that day Cressida's charming letter was read aloud, full of pretty expressions of regret that she could not come, as her visit to London had been postponed—and of thanks for their kindness; so graceful and so naturally worded as to make the whole family feel pleased with themselves and with her. Her very note-paper was unique and bewitching, the envelope of an ingenious shape. How was it that Cressida, living in the country, contrived to come by the latest kickshaws, the newest fashions, long before the Marriotts had found them out? As for her monogram, it was a gem of its kind—handed round the table to be praised, and carefully put aside for an honourable place in Miss Marriott's collection.

A complimentary chorus lamenting her refusal followed; upon which Mr. Marriott, who, as the open-handed master of a mint of money, never could see why his wife and daughters should have anything to lament, and to whom Cressida had sent a special message, observed,

'Why not ask her here?'

A motion that occasioned a long debate. Mrs. Marriott was sleepy and slow, and it took time for an idea to percolate into her mind. But the end was that, a day or two later, an invitation was sent, and accepted by return of post.

Norbert and Fan, who heard of it first when all was settled, were both taken by surprise. The Marriotts were dull people; and that Cressida should choose to be their guest for a week passed Fan's understanding, but she was delighted at the news.

Norbert's feelings were running rather wild. The dominant one was of immense delight at the thought of meeting, away from home and parental eyes, well aware how this would be in his favour.

Meanwhile Cressida was busied with the maidenly cares of overhauling her wardrobe. That the Miss Marriotts, with a father who paid their bills without looking at them, would shine her down into a kind of Cicely Homespun, seemed to her as probable as it was provoking. Still there was a want of sympathy between those birds and their fine feathers that was apt to make itself felt, whereas Cressida knew herself for an adept in the refinements of the clothes philosophy.

So one afternoon, with an amount of luggage which *she* thinks singularly moderate, though she cannot persuade her father to be of the same opinion, Cressida is duly put into the train at Lulington that is to take her to town, and to 'come what may' besides.

CHAPTER V.

CRESSIDA'S CHOICE.

THE journey seemed long; it was growing dark when Cressida reached the London terminus. She was half asleep; and the sud-

den thrust into the din and hustling throng at the bear-garden of the station was unpleasantly bewildering. But she had hardly stepped out on the platform when the Marriotts' servant, with the peculiar sagacity that observant beings of his class acquire, having rapidly singled her out from among a score of women, gentle and simple, as *the* young lady whom he had been sent to meet, came up, touched his hat, saying automatically that Mr. Marriott's carriage was there waiting. She got in, the luggage was found in a moment, and mysteriously stowed away; and Cressida rolled off in state, thinking laughingly of Cinderella. But what an improvement upon that young woman's traditional coach was Mr. Marriott's new barouche, so roomy and light, and without a sign of effort anywhere about its progress!

The girl was tired enough to find a luxurious pleasure in being carried thus quickly and comfortably through the air. She leant back, enjoying the easy, springy motion, and smiling to herself as she contrasted all this with her drive to Lullington in the ancient clerical pony-chaise, built in the genesis of such vehicles—where she sat half buried in her own luggage, and holding on to it tenaciously, lest a truant box or bag should take French leave—and drawn by Tommy, the shuffling, stumbling, half-blind pony which, from mixed motives, part sentimental, part economical, Mr. Landon could not make up his mind to replace.

The air was cold; but Cressida, nestled under the enormous fur carriage-rug, defied it, liked it even. O, she felt very much *in loco*, and looked it too. There was a curious tinge of distinction without haughtiness that pervaded her appearance and manner, and that

fitted her uncommonly for lordling it gracefully over her inferiors. Her travelling costume would have been called a trifle too pretty by those who uphold that dress should not solicit attention. It was significant how many heads were turned sharply to look at her as she passed, whilst other women, by the dozen, drove by unheeded. Meanwhile Cressida's lively fancy was taking the most extraordinary flights. She was going through a rapid series of imaginary personations—passing from her own position to that of divers female celebrities, whose lot, whether by virtue of their birth, or their talents, or their beauty, or their self-degradation, has been cast among the great ones of this earth—court-beauties, Adelina Pattis, Marguerite Gautiers. She reviewed them all, and their royal roads and short cuts to elysiums various, with a dreary, cynical keenness, that took away the glamour of sentiment from each picture in turn, as remorselessly as a propagandist monk could have done.

The Marriotts lived close to Kensington Gardens. Their house was one of those prize tabernacles of elegance, luxury, and convenience, of which London has a few to show, and that suggest individuality rather than exclusiveness—the *parvenu* banker or merchant, the brilliantly successful author or artist, rather than aristocracy with sixteen quarters, cumbrous heirlooms, and all the inconveniences of superannuated grandeur.

Mr. Marriott's father had been a self-made man, and so far from blushing at his plebeian origin that he took pains to din it into the ears of everybody he met—quite a superfluous trouble, by the way, as his appearance spoke for itself. This honest man had long

been gathered to his honest fathers, and his son was not sorry to be saved being perpetually reminded of the soil of which he was at least only the grandchild.

Cressida, dismounting, stepped into a glass vestibule stuffed with palms and plantains. The hall beyond was furnished with *objets de luxe*—among which the biggest was an aquarium—and passing on she was shown into the drawing-room, where the gorgeous hangings and ostentatious display of wealth generally jarred not a little on her finer taste. The ladies of the family were waiting to welcome her. How her graceful apparition seemed to enliven the dull splendour of that state apartment. Cressida was overloaded with attentions, and chattered away gaily to her hospitable hosts, wondering meantime to herself why tea should taste better—as it certainly does—out of delicate egg-shell china, bread-and-butter out of a lordly dish. With a single glance she seemed to take an estimate of the room and its false relation to those who dwelt therein. A glorious piano—upon which no Marriott could play even tolerably. Books of every description on the shelves; but which to those women were but as so many yards of red morocco, they having no curiosity to inquire within upon anything. Then as to the appointments: the raw material of an ideal *salon* was there, certainly, but all so artlessly put together as to produce no more harmonious impression than an upholsterer's shop. So with the Marriotts' toilettes; costly, indeed, but so unhappily chosen and badly worn as to throw out the somewhat homely and commonplace features of the mother and girls far more strongly than brown holland could have done. 'Ah, if all this were mine, how different it should be!'

was the burden of Cressida's contemplations.

Her own room was delightful—a mass of sea blue—'the blue grotto,' she called it laughingly, as she went round approving its nicknacks one by one. Everything that met her eyes was a tiny work of art: the candlesticks, the brackets, the delicate china, and opaline glass—bagatelles, by all means, which it were folly to rate too highly. But, for her, the potent charm of all this was that it idealised, so to speak, the common, everyday facts of life, the trivial routine which makes up so large a part of every woman's existence, and with which some have to content themselves altogether. Why, there was even a tiny pleasure to be got out of washing your hands in an alcove like a seamaid's haunt, and where the crockery had shaped itself into shells and taken their pale transparent colouring. To sensitive people life in such clover presents a series of petty pleasures, which are just so many net additions to the sum of human enjoyment.

Cressida was intensely susceptible to such impressions, and encouraged this tendency in herself, forgetting that her epicureanism, though not so palpably gross, was only a step above that of a *bon vivant*, who finds the wherewithal for his earthly paradise in eating and drinking. She was ready enough to philosophise, but shirked moralising. It was a treat to have the choice of three enormous full-length mirrors to criticise herself in. At home her glass only showed her her head, and the light came in the wrong way, behind the dressing-table. Gardinias and stephanotis were set on her toilet-table in a vase, and she chose the best for her hair. What a profusion of pink wax-candles! How poor Mrs. More's econo-

mical soul would revolt against such a waste of sperm ! thought Cressida laughingly, as she lit them all, and looked with some approval at her reflection.

Certainly Cressida, like others, would have fancied a revolution, with a redistribution of property in her own favour. What right had these stupid Marriotts to an opulence that overweighted them, whilst she, so infinitely better fitted to enjoy and turn it to account than they, vegetated in an anything but 'golden' mean ?

That first evening with the plutocrats was dull. Mrs. Marriott was never more than half awake. She had run to size somewhat, and seemed in a state of partial hibernation. The girls, like her, had more of the outward and visible than the inward and spiritual to show. The banker was the best company of them all, and the conversation at dinner was chiefly between him and Cressida. He was a curious compound of benevolence and malice, suavity and hardness, a character that repeats itself in birds of his feather. The course of life had run very smooth for him. Still the necessary qualities for his avocation, and which had become habitual to him, were shrewdness, vigilance, critical mistrust, and his open, philanthropic forehead and genial, hospitable manner were kept in check by thin, sarcastic lips and a cold and acute, though not unkind, eye.

With Cressida, whom he took to immensely, he was all sugarcandy, without caustic. She found plenty to talk about with him, but once alone with the ladies she was threatened with a yawning fit it required her utmost politeness to hide.

The next day was a little better. She got the girls alone. They were going to a ball that night, and the morning slipped by in talking

chiffons, the afternoon in buying them. Both daughters made Cressida their confidante in turn. Now the Miss Marriotts were good, honest English girls, with a lurking ambition to be fast and advanced. But Nature had so willed it, that they could not make a *risqué* speech without blushing, nor hear one without being put out of countenance for the evening. In vain they read piles of French novels and plays, and tried to assimilate them. As well try and bring up sheep on caviare and olives, caterpillars on honeydew and absinthe. Of course with their large fortunes they did not want for suitors, and to Cressida they confided the ups and downs of their love-affairs. These struck her as profoundly uninteresting, and irritated her a little. Then came sly, shy 'chaff' about Norbert and herself, which irritated her more.

Norbert was dining with them that night ; Fan had gone off with some friends to a lecture. Mr. Marriott had excused himself from the ball ; and when, dinner over, his womankind vanished to their tiring-rooms to begin the fearful and wonderful process of putting on ball-dresses, the banker suddenly became jocular and flighty, and suggested an impromptu visit to the theatre. Cressida caught at the idea, and Norbert made no objection. Mr. Marriott's little brougham was brought round, and took off the trio straightway to the most attractive entertainment they could think of. The house was full, with the exception of the very best box. This was just what Mr. Marriott would have wished for their party, as he had no idea of doing anything except in a merchant-princely fashion. He was enjoying his outing mightily. It was like a leap back into his bachelor-days. He seldom went to the theatre now he had a

family to take; and when he did, such expeditions were not enlivening. It was different to-night. Cressida, in the softest, palest blue-silk attire—a tint that set off the colour of her wavy hair wreathed round behind with the simplicity of a Grecian statue—as usual attracted at least the cursory notice of everybody. Opera-glasses were pretty equally divided between the stage-heroine and herself, as she did not fail to observe.

All this was greatly exhilarating in its way. Norbert was in unwonted spirits, ‘came out,’ talked, joked, as ready as his companions to enter into the spirit of their little frolic.

Then, when the play ended, Mr. Marriott said he should take them to supper—he knew the right place—they should wind up in proper style. It was wonderfully late when they got home; still Cressida was not tired, but in a great state of glee and spirits. She thanked Mr. Marriott in a charming way for the pleasure he had given her. He replied jestingly, but with a significant glance from her to Norbert, that he wished he had the opportunity oftener.

Breakfast was very late the next day, and Cressida had plenty of leisure for private morning meditations. Thought had shot far ahead the night before. She had seen herself married to Norbert, originating a little domain of her own—on a smaller scale than this—but how far superior! Even Elise de Saumarez should envy her. She would not see more of the Marriotts in the plural than she could help; but the banker should come and dine with them when his ladies were out, as often as he liked. What sort of a wedding gift would he consider sufficiently magnificent to come from him to her?

‘Vile, mercenary, sordid wretch

that I am,’ she uttered aloud; ‘how I hate and despise myself!’

Fan found Norbert very silent and absent the next morning. But she was used to his moods. She could not get a word out of him on the subject of Professor Matthison. A few days, she knew, must decide the matter, and she supposed he was turning over in his mind how to manage the catastrophe with his father, and thought she would not tease him about it. Still his silence was puzzling, and on her venturing to ask whether he had had any opportunity yesterday of talking it over with Cressida, he said ‘No,’ so curtly, that she could but take the hint and hold her tongue.

The ‘big spread’ which followed on the next day was a nondescript entertainment that began with a large dinner-party and wound up with a little dance for the young people.

At dinner Cressida was seated opposite Norbert. He was looking rather pale and strange to-night, but looking his best too. Somehow, even when her spirits were running away with her and she was making wild speeches (not unprovoked) to her neighbour, her eyes kept reverting to him, and always with one thought. What a contrast he was in his untarnished youth and truth and refinement to all the other young men in the room, and of how superior a cast!

They belonged to the most ordinary type London society furnishes—freshmen, Government clerks, embryo barristers, officers, idlers—one and all ready to amuse themselves with Cressida as by far the most attractive girl present, but who were in no danger of sacrificing their permanent advantage to a fancy. Not one but would have been ready, on the contrary, to swear everlasting fidelity

to either of the Miss Marriotts, ay, and even to keep his vow.

The dancing began. Cressida was in universal request. One cavalier after another came, waltzed, flattered, then resigned her with a sigh and an intimation of their regret that they could not 'do as they liked,' namely, engage her for the next and the next.

'In other words,' thought Cressida, 'as they hope Mr. Marriott will ask them to dinner again, they must dance with his daughters, and so on. Bah! if I were a man, I would only waltz with people that I cared for.'

It is pretty to look at her as she careers round the room. Her enchanted partner—a young hopeful of the Foreign Office—serves only to show her off, as a master of the ballet might a graceful *danseuse*. He happens to be a good-looking fellow, however, and Norbert, meanwhile, who does not dance, stands leaning against a door, with all the devils of jealousy agog in his heart, as he watches the self-complacent Civil servant and the intoxicating smile with which Cressida repays his attentions.

'Are you going to Lady Tuft's ball on Wednesday?' murmurs the young man in her ear as they spin round.

'On Wednesday,' says Cressida, laughing low, 'I go back to my country home, in the backwoods, you know.'

'Where's that? is it far?' continues the Foreign Office representative imploringly.

'Two hours and a half by the Great Western,' returns the girl, with mock gravity.

'You are leaving town then! But this is horrible!' he pursues. 'If I die for it, I must have another waltz with you before the year is out. A young lady told me the other day that she knew there

would be dancing in heaven. I doubted her; but I would believe you now, if you told me.'

Cressida shakes her head playfully. 'Cannot say, and indeed I do not care; as for my part, I never expect to get there.'

'Do you never have any balls at—*what* is the name of the place on the Great Western?'

'Sometimes.'

'Then will you let me know when there is one, and I'll come down on purpose. I will indeed, if you'll promise me a dance first.'

'No time like the present,' replies Cressida laughingly.

Her partner's nonsense began to weary her at last, and she sought for some chance of escape. There was Norbert, standing in the same attitude in the doorway. Again she noticed how distinguished he looked; the other men were monkeys by his side. He was young, true, but with the singular absence of cubbishness of those who are never to know that stage.

These reflections did not stop her from responding merrily to her companion's chatter, as they walked up and down the room; he thinking how to get rid of his next partner, she how to get rid of him.

'I'm engaged for this,' said he, as the music struck up again; 'but—'

'So am I,' broke in Cressida promptly. They were close to where Norbert was standing, and she stopped, looking up at him, saying ingenuously, 'This is ours, you know.'

No. 1 resigned her accordingly, and went. Norbert was staring at her in surprise. She laughed.

'Forgive the little *ruse*, Norbert,' she said; 'that man was becoming unbearable, quite. I'd had enough of him for one evening.' Sliding her arm in his, she drew him away into the hall out-

side, saying, 'Why do you stand there, Norbert, like Lara, frowning on the dancers? I've been watching you.'

'I'm no dancer,' said Norbert shortly.

'I think it's very self-sacrificing of men to dance at all,' observed Cressida; 'so few succeed, the rest only scuffle about. See, Norbert, there's one of my ex-partners waltzing with Miss Marriott. I hate that painted-looking gown of hers. Wasn't it Heine who said that English girls in ball-dresses, and moving about, were like wooden butterflies? How true it was! And the man is, for all the world, like the nutcrackers dancing. O Norbert, Norbert, I hope he and I did not look so awkward as that.'

'Am I never to have a moment alone with you, Cressida?' he said suddenly.

'Alone!' she echoed playfully, 'and at a ball! I confess I don't see how—'

'Never?' repeated Norbert, with emphasis, looking her steadily in the face.

There was a minute's silence; she felt herself arraigned at last. They stood still, apparently watching the dancers, whilst Cressida, forced into giving a yes or no, and distantly aware how much hung on her answer at this moment, hesitated, weighed, wavered, or fancied she did so; for, however unconsciously, her mind was already made up.

'Come to-morrow,' she said, in a low distinct voice. 'I know you're free. The Marriotts want you to go with us to see some pictures at four o'clock; but come at three, when they have their singing lesson.'

Nothing more passed between them. They went and had ices, and then returned to the ball-room: Norbert to muse and look

on, Cressida to dance through the rest of the programme with fresh spirit. From that moment she resolutely stopped her eyes and ears and sense to all but what she wished to perceive. The Miss Marriotts were jolly girls—the banker was a brick. London life had charms, and Norbert was a dear good fellow. She could make him happy, and she would, of course.

The Miss Marriotts, though their lot had fallen to them in a fair ground, were not without unfulfilled aspirations. Both were bent on acquiring some distinction in music, singing in particular—a desire laudable in itself, though in their case the feeble deed bade fair ever to fall far short of the fervent will to an extent of which they were blissfully unconscious.

Signor Pellegrini, their master—a wily Italian, adored by both sisters—was far too shrewd to betray the least hint of his real opinion of their musical powers. They had strong voices; would toil patiently at scales and exercises, if required; take any number of lessons, and pay any price for them. He was suavity itself to such pupils, praised them judiciously, and gave them grand operatic airs to sing, which pleased their vanity and ambition. Now their voices were tolerable, and it was not impossible that by some distant day they might acquire some command over them, but no nearer singing would they become for that. Miss Marriott might perhaps be imagined chanting a psalm in a village choir; but the force of fancy could go no farther. To-day, however, Signor Pellegrini had chosen to put her through one of Bellini's most pathetic airs. Hear her invoking her Elvino and bewailing his cruelty in heartrending accents—or earrending, rather, thought Cressida,

who had taken up her position in the anteroom, where she was out of sight of pianoforte, teacher, and pupils—when Norbert walked in quietly, unannounced, and unperceived by the trio in the distance.

She put out her hand. 'Did not I tell you this would be a good moment? Come, we can talk to Signor Pallegriani's accompaniment.'

'And Signorina Marriotti's singing,' said Norbert gaily.

Cressida pouted prettily. 'Tell me, Norbert, that I sing better than that.'

They were just attacking a composition of the master's.

'*Sempre t'adorerò*,' wailed Miss Marriotti, with an energy of intention that ought to carry the day and rouse a stone from insensibility.

'For goodness' sake, come into the hall; it will be a little farther off,' said Norbert distractedly.

They slipped out unobserved into the empty hall. Cressida began to examine the aquarium, and still distant echoes came from the drawing-room, where Miss Marriotti was conjuring her *caro ben*, very much out of tune, to return—or to let her die, and so forth.

'Cressida,' said Norbert, 'Professor Matthison is coming to see me to-morrow.'

'To-morrow!' cried Cressida helplessly.

'Yes.'

He spoke with firmness and fortitude. There was the stuff of a hero in that boy. Cressida knew that, and admired it in a mournful way; for she felt herself no heroine.

'Have you answered him, then?' she asked gently.

'Not yet.'

Her voice was soft and thrilling—his, hard and unmoved—though the state of her mind was abso-

lute serenity as compared to his. Cressida was far from calm, however. She had never liked Norbert so well as during this visit; he showed to particular advantage among commonplace people with a touch of vulgarity about them. The boy was such a perfect gentleman; his instincts, his pervading spirit so gentle and good—too good for her, she thought sometimes.

Meanwhile Norbert was feeling farther and farther away from Germany as he watched her, her eyes averted and intent upon the sea-urchins and sponges, anemones and star-fish behind the glass; but the sweet, wayward, yielding smile on her lips, maddening to the youth at that critical moment—for whom was that?

'Cressida!'

She turned round to him impulsively, and pressed both her hands before her face.

'Don't!' he said excitedly. 'I wish you would tell me at once—in plain words—that I'm to go—where I shall never see you or hear of you. It is the only, *only* thing for me now!'

His agitation, which he no longer could hide, was rapidly gaining upon the sensitive girl. All possible generous impulses seemed to combine with others to drive her on. She lifted her face, and clasping her hands behind her head, turned away restlessly as if seeking for something.

'*O, lasciate me morir!*' shouted Miss Marriotti; but the untimely interruption passed unheeded and unheard.

'I've offended you,' said Norbert, disheartened.

She shook her head.

'O, no!'

'You don't care enough to take offence at anything I may say.'

'There! if you *will* distort my meaning,' she said, laughing softly.

'Cressida, only tell me what you *do* mean! You must not—in deed, you must not—throw words at me in play just now.'

He spoke almost harshly. Why must she know him so well—see through so clearly to the depth of feeling beneath? The glimpse overcame her and she surrendered.

'No, Norbert,' she said tremulously; 'I am in earnest. Look at me.' She laid both her hands on his and raised her little head. 'How can you suppose that what decides your life should be a trifle to me?—as if *mine* were not involved, as well as yours, and together with it!'

Was it Cressida speaking? Norbert was mute with a delight past his expressing. A barred door had burst open in his imagination, letting in such a flood of desired light, and revealing a perspective so enchanting that it overcame him. Its soothing beauty transcended hope and dreams.

'But, Norbert,' she whispered gently, 'speak the truth to me now, yourself. Could I really ever make up to you for the loss of what you love?'

'For all that—for more!' he said, still holding her hands and gazing into her eyes, bewildered by his own delight.

Odd and incongruous thoughts began to dart through Cressida's mind; odd and incongruous strains were wafted from the next room, the voices of the two Miss Marriotts blending—to speak politely—in a duet, apparently maritime.

'*Voga, voga,*' they reiterated, '*voga, O marinar!*'; but Norbert heard nothing—silent for happiness: that happiness of which equal shares are dealt out differently. Some get theirs in yearly doles; but to Norbert all the long arrears due to him throughout a sad childhood, a lonely and unsatisfactory youth, and the accu-

mulated interest, had been poured into his hands at once.

The sweet feeling of the joy she was giving lit up Cressida's countenance with an angelic expression. At that moment she really only thought of Norbert as her lover, and had forgotten that he had golden prospects to back him.

Signor Pellegrini came down with a loud crash on the final chord of the duet, and began bidding courtly adieux to his pupila. Cressida's and Norbert's hands severed suddenly, and they were busy watching a zoophyte shrimp when the smiling Italian passed through. The sea-anemone had caught the shrimp, and was eating him when the Miss Marriotts came into the hall, saying,

'Ah, there you are, Norbert; that's all right—now for the picture-gallery. The carriage will be here directly.'

Norbert groaned and submitted, as he must; but Cressida excused herself with great decision, declaring she was dead-tired with dancing last night, and her head ached, and she meant to stay at home.

Half an hour's absolute solitude in the drawing-room restored her to herself. The disturbed currents of her mind grew smooth and clear again. It was done. She was glad it was over. Her two most prominent feelings at that moment were her real affection for Norbert and a kind of personal exultation in the sense of appropriated devotion. She had been a little scared by the actual encounter with a passionate feeling asserting itself—a very different thing from merely divining its existence. But it seemed to her it would be the easiest thing to make him happy; she meant to be very sweet to him always. As for herself, there was an end of youth and roses certainly; but an end also to those irksome cir-

cumstances, those income limitations, from which no definite escape had ever offered itself to her but this.

She was startled out of her reflections by the entrance of the servant with the lamp. The automaton bore also a silver salver, which he presented to her, with a card :

‘Mr. Stephen Halliday.’

Would she see the gentleman?

Cressida rose, said ‘Yes’ quickly, wondering withal what had possessed him to come. Well, she was glad; of all people he was the one she would, or fancied she would, have liked best to see.

He came in, apologised slightly for calling; he was not acquainted with Mr. Marriott, but, having heard of her being in town, had ventured to send in his card as he was passing through, just to bid his farewells before starting for Egypt.

‘I thought you were already on the P. and O. boat,’ said Cressida carelessly, with a smile.

‘Not yet, you see,’ he replied; ‘I start in a day or two.’

They seated themselves, half facing each other. The room was rather dark, and the strong lights and shadows cast by the lamp on the table around Halliday’s chair helped to give something vividly Rembrandtesque to the figure in it, as they fell on his well-knit frame, crisp reddish-brown hair and colouring, and rugged, but vigorously thoughtful, face. He had a look of the uncompromising Dutch painter about him at all times. It was striking now.

They talked on. He seemed a little depressed. The mercury of Cressida’s spirits, on the contrary, had never stood so high. He noticed it, and felt baffled.

‘Pray, for how many years are we to think of you as exploring the Nile?’ she asked indifferently.

‘Years!’ he laughed. ‘I am not outlawed or exiled. Months—months—a year at the most.’

‘Indeed!’ she said politely.

‘So, you see, we may really, perhaps, meet again in England very shortly. Still, starting for Africa is not quite the same as starting—for Switzerland, for instance.’

Cressida laughed, whilst the thought shot by that even a Swiss tour is eventful sometimes.

‘Do you know,’ he said suddenly, ‘that your friend and mine, Mrs. de Saumarez, is thinking of taking Monks’ Orchard, a place not far from your home, I think?’

‘Monks’ Orchard!’ she repeated, surprised.

‘It is news, I know,’ said Mr. Halliday, ‘only just out. She mentioned it in a farewell letter I received from her this morning; says she is going there, with her scapegrace of a stepson, who is coming back from India, and she demands a promise from me that I shall pay them a visit if I return in time.’

‘O!’

He was disappointed at this indifference and constraint he could not account for.

‘Perhaps I shall see you then?’ he asked.

A simple question, but spoken tentatively, significantly.

‘I do not know,’ she replied, with a frozen feeling and tone.

‘Why, is it not your local habitation? Of course, therefore, the last place in which I ought, I suppose, to expect to find you; but—’

‘Only by that time,’ resumed Cressida, ‘it seems likely that I—I may have changed both my local habitation and—’

She stopped there, and smiled.

Enough. It was a tolerable thunderstroke for Halliday; but he did not wince. Neither did he

pretend indifference; his countenance awoke to an intense activity of inquiry, betokening the inward stir.

'And your name?' he finished quickly for her. 'Do you mean to say you are going to be married?'

'It is so very extraordinary, isn't it?' said Cressida, with an ethereal mockery of tone.

'May I know more?'

'I am engaged to Norbert Alleyne,' she said simply.

Cressida, though she live long, will never quite forget the hurt of that moment. His quick instinctive glance round the room, its rich hangings, crystal candelabra, delicate Sèvres-china ornaments, mirrors wreathed round with camellias and violets (the Marriotte's butler had such good taste), the unspoken contempt, sudden fading of his previous solicitude—O, it was like a little stab from a penknife, that breaks and leaves the blade in the wound! As well—or better—might he have stood up and spoken out: 'You have struck a bargain with a boy to whom your self is supremely indifferent—for this trash of life! So much for women!'

Instead of this, there came the politest, coldest, constrained rejoinder.

'I have not the pleasure of knowing Mr. Alleyne; but I must congratulate you.'

'I have known him since we were children,' said Cressida proudly. 'We were playfellows at Fernswold.'

'He is a nephew of Mr. Marriotte's, is he not?' said Halliday simply.

Simplicity that stung her afresh. She hated Halliday for the insinuation; and felt as if she would never forgive it.

She smiled, and bent her head, replying, 'Yes,' icily; there was a little feeling of triumph and bravado behind. That ended their dialogue really. The sentences that followed were mere common-places, to lead up to an automatic farewell on both sides.

When he was gone, she felt as if after a battle. Her heart thumped unpleasantly; she found herself suddenly breathless—exhausted. She was glad that the others did not come in immediately.

When at last the Miss Marriottes returned, they found her there still, but paler than when they had left; her eyes dilated, her mouth quivering with a nervous tremor even they must observe.

'What is the matter?' they asked.

Cressida said she would tell them presently.

The matter was—that she and Norbert were engaged.

(To be continued.)

VALENTINE'S VIGIL.

A Story of the Day and Night.

BY W. W. FENN.

CHAPTER I.

THE DAY.

'Do you know, Nina, that Valentine Grey is home again?'

'No; but I know now you tell me—not that *I* am concerned with the news. Mr. Valentine Grey is nothing to me.'

'O, indeed; I thought he used to be rather devoted to you, and that you—'

'Absurd nonsense, Fanny. We used to laugh and talk a great deal—at least *he* used; *I* never found anything to laugh at in what he said. I found his conversation especially dull, though I know he thought it otherwise; he thought it very humorous and witty, but I never could see it. In truth, I promised that I would record in gold letters every genuine joke I heard him make. Yes, I said I would put them down in a diary, and that I would be bound to get all he ever made in a year into one day's division of it.'

'Ah, but he is very clever, Nina, you must admit; his conversation is considered brilliant at times.'

'I admit nothing of the kind, Fanny; and I repeat, I never found it so.'

'Well, he is back at home again, at any rate, and he will be here to-night; so you will have an opportunity of seeing if his trip to the States has improved him.'

'O, coming here to-night, is he? What is to-night? Let me see—the 13th! Ah, then he has

come home, no doubt, to be in time for to-morrow—his saint's day. H'm! I daresay he thinks that very funny. I have no doubt he will be making all sorts of stupid jokes about his name, and cupids and darts, and the rest of it.'

'And why not, Nina? You are too hard on him. To-morrow is his birthday, that's why he is named Valentine; and surely there's no harm in his making fun of it.'

'I didn't say there was any harm; I only said it was stupid, and that he is stupid, and that I don't like him—there.'

This scrap of conversation took place in the snug but capacious drawing-room of a large house in Dolton-gardens, South Kensington.

The occupants of the drawing-room in question, at the moment when it is first necessary for us to play the eaves-dropper and looker-on, were, first (to give precedence to age), Mrs. Davenell, a little woman of fifty, with a bright cheery twinkle in her brown eyes and a beaming expression of the most perfect good-nature for ever playing over her small and delicate face, a lady whom you felt you might always appeal to in any emergency with the certainty of receiving the very assistance you would want, one too who was up to any amount of fun, and on whom you might rely for the most perfect sympathy in any undertaking you might have afoot, grave or humorous.

Then there were her two daughters, Fanny and Emily, who looked, as we might say of books, exactly like exquisitely bound and printed second editions of their mother. There was a great similarity not only of face and feature, but in dress and manner, only the younger ladies were neater and trimmer in certain details. This perhaps was not saying very much; for though all three were the fairest-skinned, freshest, and most blooming of women, there was a degree of carelessness in the way their dresses were put on and worn, and in their general air, that shocked their milliners, and had acquired for them amongst intimate friends the *sobriquet* of the 'Happy-go-luckies.'

The young gentleman who was the object of the conversation we began our story with was responsible for this cognomen. Mr. Valentine Grey, when he had first come to be intimate at the house, had called them the 'Happy-go-luckies,' because he declared they were the happiest and luckiest family he had ever known; and that no one could ever go to the house without being made happy and lucky too. This was thought to be very humorous, for, as we may have already gleaned, Mr. Grey had established for himself in Dolton-gardens the reputation of a wit, although, as we may also have gleaned, there was one person who refused to admit his right to it; and as this young lady made up the fourth and last occupant of the drawing-room on this present 13th February 1876, let me say a word or two about her here.

Nina Davenell, in spite of her surname, in no way resembled the other ladies who bore it; she was a tall, graceful, olive-skinned, dark-haired, brilliant, and some-

what haughty and dignified looking girl. Many persons said she had no pretensions to be considered handsome, and judging strictly by features, perhaps it was true; but at any rate, if it were, she was the handsomest plain girl you might meet with in a year's march. She was the only child of Mr. Davenell's brother, who had married a native of Bologna, and who had died (soon after his wife) when Nina was only six years old. Consequently, she had been brought up in the house of her uncle and aunt, and educated with her cousins.

She had just returned home from a visit to some friends in the country, when her cousin Fanny made the announcement to her with which these pages commence.

With the expression of her opinion that Mr. Grey was stupid and that she didn't like him, the haughty beauty left the room to take off her travelling-dress.

When she was gone, says Fanny to her mamma, after a pause, 'I never can tell, mamma, whether Nina really means what she says about Mr. Grey; can you?'

'I don't know what she means, my dear; I only know what I wish.'

'Ah, you wish that they might make a match of it.'

'I don't deny it; it would be the best thing that could happen for them both. But, dear me, I'm afraid there is no chance of it. She is always piquing herself on her dignity, and he is always so full of chaff, as you call it, that one never can tell whether they really like each other. I wish we could hit upon a plan to bring matters to a crisis, and settle it one way or the other.'

'I think we might, mamma, for I wish as you wish; and now that he is just come back, and

will, of course, be a great deal here again, it would be a good opportunity to try. It is very funny; but instantly that Nina spoke of to-morrow as being St. Valentine's-day, I began to think whether we couldn't turn that fact to account. It would be rare fun.'

'How do you mean, child?'

'Well, I don't know quite yet; it wants thinking about;' and the young lady paused in her needle-work, and, resting her chin upon her hand, stared for a minute straight into space; then her face dimpled into a mighty knowing little smile, and she said suddenly,

'I have it! If we can only make them both believe that each is very fond of the other, and that it is only the dignity of the one, and the laughing merry disposition of the other, that prevent them from showing their real feelings; if he were only sure that she cared the least little bit for him, I feel certain he will propose; if she were only sure that that chaff and nonsense that he talks was all on the surface, and that beneath there was a strong affection for her, I feel certain she will accept.'

'Yes, my dear Fanny,' said the mother, 'but how can you bring all this about? It's a very delicate, complicated business.'

'Why, my dear old silly mamma, leave that to me; don't you see that we could start it with a valentine? If we could only pretend and make it appear that she had sent one to him, and that he had sent one to her, and then expose them — well, we should have broken down the barrier of Miss Nina's dignity, at any rate.'

The door here opened, and the servant announced Mr. Valentine Grey. The three ladies rose to greet him, and, after an interchange of a few commonplace

civilities and a warm welcome, Miss Fanny slipped from the room.

'I am afraid I am awfully early, Mrs. Davenell,' said the gentleman, 'for a dinner-guest; but I know there is no false ceremony in this house; and when you said you wanted me to come and have a long talk, and hear all about my travels, I knew you meant it.'

'Of course, of course, we are delighted,' said Mrs. Davenell; and as the door opened — 'O, here is Nina! Nina, my love, here's Mr. Grey.'

That gentleman rose and saluted the tall brunette with easy grace. She, holding her head very high, and just putting out the tips of three taper fingers, exclaimed, with an air of surprise,

'Dear me, Mr. Grey, who would have expected to see you here? I thought you were away in the Far West.'

'Ah, then, you have been thinking of me; that is really very good of you.'

'I did not say so,' said Nina, with a wicked toss of her head, as she crossed the room and sat down at a small writing-table in a farther corner.

'How rude you are to Mr. Grey, Nina!' interposed her aunt. 'What a bad child it is! But you know her, Mr. Grey, and will make allowances.'

'O, indeed, yes, I know her, and esteem it a great privilege that I do,' answered the young man, resuming the seat he had originally taken near Mrs. Davenell, and which was in the large bay-window overlooking the garden and garden-door.

'Why, I thought Miss Fanny was here when I came in,' he continued, looking out of the window; 'and yet surely that is she, coming up the garden in her hat and jacket. She is like the

Irishman's bird, that has the gift of being in two places at once.'

'She has been out,' meekly here for the first time broke in her younger sister. 'I know she had a letter to post.'

'Yes, and there are no servants kept in this house,' said her mother ironically. 'That's just like Fanny. It is foolish for her to go out so late: it's getting quite dusk.'

'Well, I like people who can wait on themselves,' said Mr. Grey. 'Your house is a fine school for that, Mrs. Davenell; and very lucky for me has it been that I profited by the example. People have to wait upon themselves a good deal in the States, I can tell you.'

'Yes, I have heard so. But come, now, tell us, how far west did you get? I want to hear all about it,' answered the lady.

But the narration of Mr. Grey's adventures was destined to be yet farther delayed. The parlour-maid now entered with tea, followed, soon after, by Fanny Davenell, who, innocently assuming the air of not having been out of the room even, walked over to the table where Nina, having lighted candles, was busily writing. After a while there was a general shifting of the positions of everybody in the room, during which Fanny retired, with her sister, into a snug little conservatory which projected from the farther end of the room, and which was partially screened by a heavy *portière*.

A flight of steps communicated through this alcove with the garden which on three sides surrounded the house; and a side door also opened into the hall, into which it was quite possible to pass from the little greenhouse without entering the drawing-room.

'Perhaps,' went on Mr. Grey, in his gay and joking manner, as

he again found himself left alone with Mrs. Davenell and Nina, 'it will be better to defer an account of the stirring incidents of my travel till after dinner. Mr. Davenell will want to hear something about them, I suppose, and you will be awfully bored if I have to tell my story twice over.'

'Not at all; but as he will be home soon, and we dine early, as you know, like the unconventional barbarians that we are, and as I have one or two little matters to attend to before dinner, it will be better for you to tell us then. Will you excuse my leaving Nina to entertain you for ten minutes? Nina, my dear,' continued Mrs. Davenell, with her hand on the door, 'leave your writing, and just go and talk to Mr. Grey.'

When she had vanished, Nina rose and advanced to the fire.

'You are very busy with your pen,' said the gentleman. 'Writing valentines, I presume?'

'Yes; that is just about all my intellect is capable of at present. Your appreciation of my powers, Mr. Grey, is quite correct, if not very flattering.'

'I never flatter.'

'Truly, I know you don't; flattery was never your *cheval de bataille*.'

'Yet it always puts me hors (horse) de combat, which is the same animal, I imagine.'

'O, that is too atrocious! Is that your last, Mr. Grey, or does it come from the States?'

'No; done on the spur of the moment, I assure you. I drove the spur into that horse's flanks especially for you.'

'Worse and worse! I really can't stand this; and there is my uncle's knock. You will find him better audience than I am for your jokes. I shall leave you together.' And without another word she swept from the room.

Left alone, Mr. Grey listened for a moment, cast a wistful glance towards the door, walked to it, opened it, looked out, reclosed it, and then threw himself into an easy-chair hard by the *portière*.

It was now quite dark outside, and the room was only very dimly lighted by the candles at the writing-table and the glow of the fire. It was a favourable moment for musing; at least Valentine Grey seemed to think so, for presently he said only a little under his breath,

'What a proud puss it is! Not a bit altered since I have been away, except to grow more handsome.'

Then he gave something very like a sigh, but which ended in a low soft whistle. It need hardly be said that Mr. Grey was quite at home at the hospitable house of the Davenells; every frequenter of it, indeed, was so, and their name was legion. People could visit there upon no other terms. The easy, unconventional, hearty welcome they received compelled them to put aside all formality. Our hero, who came with a good introduction, had soon become very intimate at Dolton-gardens, after taking up his quarters in London to follow the law. Some eighteen months before our story opens, he had unexpectedly inherited a handsome property, and having more mind for seeing the world than for *Blackstone* or *Coke*, had made that tour in the States from which he had only now three days returned.

He was a tall handsome young fellow of eight-and-twenty, with crisp, curly, fair hair, and a soft beard to match—both now cropped rather close; for, according to the habit of the Briton when he comes back to London after long travelling, Valentine's first visit had

been paid to the haircutter's. His fair skin had been richly tanned by exposure to weather, and the contrast gave his blue eyes a deeper intensity and expression than usual. Altogether, the Davenell ladies had separately, but privately, concurred in the opinion that he was much improved.

Pursuing his musings after an interval, he said to himself,

'H'm, that couldn't have been Mr. Davenell's knock, or—yes—there he is in the conservatory; he is coming in that way. No; that is not his voice, either; he is not in the habit of tittering in that fashion—it's some of the girls.'

He was in the act of rising to go into the conservatory, when the sound of his own name—whispered by one of the two soft voices whose subdued prattle and laughter had attracted his attention—caught his ear. He paused and listened.

'She is really very fond of Mr. Grey, you know; I am certain of it,' said the first voice.

'You surprise me, Fanny,' said the second.

'No doubt of it.'

'But then her manner is so very rude to him.'

'O, that is nothing; only she can't help being dignified, and she only pretends to disdain all his fun and nonsense. If he would but be a little more serious at times, and not chaff her so much, he would soon see a change in her; for, I say again, she is thoroughly at heart in love with him.'

'You think so?'

'Sure so. She has been writing a valentine to him, and I have it in my hand now, and I am going to post it for her.'

'But, Fanny, you have been out once; mamma won't like your going out in the dark.'

'I sha'n't be gone a moment; I can slip out here through the garden to the pillar-box at the corner; nobody will know. Put your hat on, Emily, and come with me—quick !'

The voices ceased, a door was softly opened and shut, and Valentine Grey was again left to his musings. They now assumed, however, a more excited character.

'What have I heard ?' he said, rising. 'Those were Fanny and Emily, and they were talking about Nina and me. Of course it was Nina they meant. Can I believe my ears, that she is in love with me ? O, that would be too great a slice of luck ! But I'll find out—by Jove, I will !—and if it be true, she shall have her reward.'

At this moment the door opened, and Mrs. Davenell reëntered the room. The light in it was so dim that Valentine did not, at first, observe the change which had come over her face. Only, as she advanced towards the fire, which he had in his excitement been stirring into a blaze, did he see that her bright cheerful expression had vanished, and that she was in some distress. Before he had time to speak, she began :

'Dear Mr. Grey, sad—sad news, most unexpected ! How can I tell it you ? Yet I must ; for you will sympathise, will help us with your advice, I feel sure you will. I have as yet had no time to tell you ; but since you have been away, our Emily has been engaged—she was to have been married next month. He seemed such a good fellow—I can't believe it—delightful, charming ; lately started in business as a stockbroker with excellent prospects, but we have not seen anything of him for two or three days ; and now Mr. Davenell brings home the news that he is

ruined—he—Horace Wynne—Emily's intended, I mean. His partner has absconded, or something, with a large sum of money, I don't quite understand. It's not generally known in the City yet. Mr. Davenell doesn't know all about it yet himself ; but Horace says he too must keep out of the way, and has written a brief letter to Mr. Davenell breaking off, or at least asking to be absolved from, his engagement. Mr. Davenell is very angry ; and out of health, as he has been for so long, it has made him quite ill. He declares that, if what he has heard be true, it is only an excuse, and that Horace is only using the disaster as a plea for throwing Emily over.'

'But,' interposed Grey, 'perhaps he thinks it only honourable, under the circumstances, to release your daughter, and not to bind her to her engagement if his prospects are ruined.'

'Ah, yes ; but this is not the worst. It might be as you suggest, quite likely, but there has come to light another circumstance which makes Mr. Davenell's idea only too reasonable. He didn't tell me how ; but this morning, just before he got Mr. Wynne's letter, he heard that he is not leading the life which a gentleman on the point of marriage ought to lead. There is a person—some woman in fact, to speak plainly—who is constantly at his chambers ; that she goes there every evening, and stays sometimes many hours. O, it will break my poor child's heart ! How shall I be able to tell her !' continued Mrs. Davenell, with renewed distress.

'Don't tell her ; wait till you are sure the report is true ; it may be open to explanation. Mr. Davenell can call this gentleman to account.'

'Ah, yes, he would have done so directly, I know ; if he were not

in such ill-health, he would have sought Horace out at once; but it has been such a shock to him that he is quite unnerved. Pray forgive me; I must go to my own room and lie down for ten minutes—I feel perfectly upset. I hardly know where my wits are gone. And, without waiting to listen to the sympathetic words Valentine Grey was beginning to utter, Mrs. Davenell once more quitted the room.

Only a few minutes elapsed, however, before the door again opened; and Valentine, going towards it, in the full expectation of seeing his kind hostess, was suddenly met by Nina.

'O, I thought—' he began.

'You have heard the sad news, Mr. Grey?'

'Indeed, yes! I am grieved beyond measure.'

'Grieved—I should think so! Are you only grieved?' she exclaimed, with more than her usual lofty and disdainful manner, whilst her dark eyes flashed fire. 'I should have expected you, as such a friend of the family, to be something besides grieved; I should have thought you would have been burning with indignation—burning to see Emily righted. I should have expected to have found you crying out for vengeance against this poltroon—this mean hypocritical fellow! To have so unblushingly deceived a girl he professes to love. O, if I were only a man, I would make him give an account of himself! I'm sure my uncle would, were he not so ill.'

'But, my dear Miss Davenell, tell me—I am ignorant of the whole affair—do you really believe what is said of Mr. Wynne to be true?'

'Certainly I do. My uncle does, and I always trust him; I always believe what he believes.'

'But perhaps it is only a temporary postponement that Mr. Wynne desires—until—until—'

'Temporary postponement—that's not the question! No, Mr. Grey, it's a paltry excuse! I tell you again, I don't believe a bit that he is ruined! O, what might not a man deserve of me who would see this matter righted!'

'Miss Davenell, you set so high a prize upon the task, that you would find no lack of knights to compete for it. Let me but hear where this man may be met with face to face, and he shall give an account of his conduct, be sure.'

'Do you mean what you say, Mr. Grey?'

'My honour upon it! I'll go straight to your uncle and get all particulars. I'll find my gentleman, he may depend. I'll not see you again till I have seen him. If I don't return to-night you shall hear from or see me the first thing in the morning.'

She let him take her hand as he spoke. He pressed it to his lips, and was gone.

'For once he seems in earnest,' she said to herself when the door had closed. 'He is not all frivolity then. Have I misjudged him? Has he really some determination of purpose, some depth of feeling, beneath that frothy nonsense which he talks?'

She sat down in the very chair near the *portière* which Valentine had so lately vacated. Scarcely had she done so, when she, like him, heard her own name whispered by some one in the conservatory. Whose voice was it? Surely Fanny's, talking to Emily. Nina was about to call out to them, when these words from Fanny's lips arrested her:

'I know he is deeply in love with Nina; I feel sure of it.'

'Can it be possible?' said Emily.

'If so, why did he go to America, and stay away so long?'

'Because she drove him away by her disdain of him, as he thought. He is come back much sooner than he intended on her account, I feel sure. If he could only be brought to understand that it is her manner, and nothing but her manner, I am positive he would speak; but he is too proud to risk a refusal. One of those letters we have been to post was from him to her; he directed it just now while she was out of the room. I offered to post it for him. He said I might if I promised not to look at the address. Of course I promised, but I was obliged to take just one little peep at it, because I guessed what it was, and I wanted to make sure. I guessed it was a valentine. Now come and dress, or we shall be missed, and shall be late for dinner.'

Before Nina could make her presence known, as she innocently thought, the two little fibbing plotters, who had entered the conservatory by the garden-steps, simultaneously with Valentine's exit from the drawing-room, now passed out of it by the door into the hall.

The face of the bewildered and startled beauty, who had risen from her chair whilst the conversation was going on, now wore the most perplexed and dazed expression.

'Am I in my right senses,' she exclaimed aloud, 'or am I dreaming? How strange! And can it be true that under all that nonsense the man has really a heart? I begin to believe it. But dear Emily, she cannot have heard of the wreck of her hopes. I must seek my aunt. O, here she is; how lucky!'

Mrs. Davenell at this moment appeared at the door, saying,

'Is Emily here? Have you seen her, Nina?'

'No—yes—that is, no. Come in, dear aunt; I want to speak to you.' She closed the door and went on, putting her arm round Mrs. Davenell's waist, 'O, dear aunt, will you be advised by me? You have not yet told Emily?'

'No; I can't find her.'

'Ah, then take my advice—do not tell her to-night. Wait till to-morrow, at least. I have my reasons. Mr. Grey has promised to find out all about it—to go to Mr. Wynne instantly, and make him explain, and learn his real intentions. He was but going to get some particulars from my uncle, and he said he would be off. He is gone by this time, no doubt. Wait at least till we hear from him. Come, let us go back to the study, and tell my uncle, and beg him to keep his own counsel for to-night.'

Then, hurrying Mrs. Davenell out of the room, the two sought Mr. Davenell in his den. There they were closeted for some half-hour with him, with the result that throughout the dinner and during the rest of the evening no one could have had the least idea that anything like a calamity was overhanging any member of that household. Mrs. Davenell accounted to her daughters for Mr. Grey's unexpected departure by a dexterously-worded story of news which her husband had brought home, and which affected some investments or something—she did not pretend to understand such matters—which he, Valentine, was about to make, and he had gone off to see the stockbroker without delay. He was sorry to lose his evening, but the business was important. He promised to return if he got it over in time. But he appeared no more that night.

CHAPTER II.

THE NIGHT.

I do not attempt to describe the effect which the stratagem practised on Nina by her cousins had upon that young lady, nor do I pretend to defend or condemn the plot. It may have been highly reprehensible, it may have been perfectly justifiable, I don't offer an opinion. I am but the faithful chronicler of events, and proceed with their record.

Nina is the first in the breakfast-room the following morning. A few letters arrive, but there is only one for her. The address is evidently in a disguised hand, observing which fact, as she opens and reads the missive, she mutters,

'Ridiculous attempt to deceive. As I expected, his valentine! How absurd he is! Will nothing make him serious? Will he for ever be joking, even in the midst of the saddest events? Ah, but I do him injustice; I forgot this was written and posted, according to what I overheard Fanny say, before he knew what had happened to Emily. Yes, to be sure. But, then, there ought to be another letter from him: he promised he would write if he did not return last night. O, this is too tiresome! At least he might have written to my aunt, or somebody.'

Here Mrs. Davenell and the two girls came in, lamenting that the increased indisposition of Mr. Davenell would prevent his going to the City to-day; but their solicitude for their father did not prevent Fanny and Emily from exchanging glances; for they had seen Nina hiding her letter as they entered. Mrs. Davenell and her niece likewise cast meaning looks at each other, the latter slightly shaking her head in response to the elevated eyebrows of the former, and the breakfast

proceeded in a silence that was somewhat unusual. When the meal was over, aunt and niece seized an opportunity of withdrawing together.

'As he has not written, I feel sure he will be here before the morning is out,' whispers Nina, directly they were in the hall.

'I hope so; I will give him till twelve o'clock; if he is not here by then, I must let Emily know the worst; it is now half-past ten,' said Mrs. Davenell, as the two passed into the drawing-room.

They had scarcely been there a minute when the bell rang, and Mr. Grey was announced and shown in.

A glance at his tired look and unchanged dress told them that he had been up all night. Reading their thoughts, he said abruptly, as he shook hands,

'Yes, but I have just come straight from Mr. Wynne; I have seen him at last, and I have had a rare night's waiting and watching, I can assure you.'

Then, with a significant look at Nina, he added, 'But I kept my vigil faithfully. I did not stop to see you, Mrs. Davenell, last night, because I thought there was no time to be lost; but I daresay Mr. Davenell told you that he confided to me many details of the case, and the letter he had received from Mr. Wynne. Well, armed with these, I went straight to his chambers in Gray's-inn-square. His oak was sported, but I rang the bell, and the door was opened by the woman, the laundress, in charge. She said Mr. Wynne would not be home till very late; indeed he might not return at all. She could not let me go into his rooms, because she did not know me. What could I do? I took counsel with myself. I had promised not to return here

until I had seen him. There was nothing for it, then, it seemed to me, but to wait for him outside his chambers, on the staircase; but, then, I did not even know him by sight. I could, therefore, only identify him by seeing him actually go up to his own door. "I must not lose sight of that door," I said to myself, "however long I wait." It was then barely eight o'clock, but I sat down on the stairs, where I could command a full view of his oak, and began my vigil; and I sat there till past twelve.'

'O you poor man,' here exclaimed Nina, 'how good of you!'

'Well,' Grey went on, with a grateful look at the young lady, 'not a creature approached Mr. Wynne's chambers; many people went up and down to other floors, but none of them stopped on his. Now, I had ensconced myself in the angle of the upper flight of stairs to get a little out of the draught—for the night was cold and windy—and where, like a true detective, I might avoid observation. When I heard the clock strike twelve, and there was no sign of him, I began to think that probably he would not come home. This did not seem unlikely, if he was keeping out of the way; still I could not desert my post; I dared not lose a chance of catching him, so I waited patiently on. At length, when everything had become perfectly quiet, and the traffic on the stairs had ceased, judge of my surprise at seeing the door of his chambers quietly opened and a man's head appear. He had his hat on, and, after listening for a moment, he came out.

"O-ho" thought I, "you have been at home all the while, have you?" and I was about to pounce down upon him from my corner, when, to my disgust, I saw he

was not alone; a woman, thickly veiled and muffled up, followed him out on to the landing, and the two, after shutting the door, descended the stairs softly, but quickly, together.'

'Then it is all true!' exclaimed Mrs. Davenell, with some agitation.

Valentine raised his hand, and continued,

'I decided that this was not the moment to tax him with his perfidy, if he was really the man I was seeking, and I had fair reason to suppose that he was, so I waited till the two were clear of the house before I followed; yet, you may be sure, I was not going to lose sight of him now, though I did not mean that he should get any suspicion of being watched. As I emerged from the chambers into the square, I saw them crossing the further side of it, and making for the Holborn gate of the inn. When the porter let them out he looked back, and seeing me following, held the gate open for me also to pass, and thus I saw which way they turned. Going straight up Holborn, and continuing their way at a rapid pace through the silent streets, till they came to Tottenham-court-road, they branched off into the region of Fitzroy-square, finally stopping at a dingy house in Howland-street. Here the woman bade the man good-night, and with a latch-key let herself in, whilst he, turning on his heel, bent his steps eastward again by the way he had come. As unobserved I had followed him out from, so I now followed him back to, Gray's Inn. I let him reënter the gate, and when it had closed upon him about two minutes, I rang the bell and went in also. Then I so calculated my time as to overtake him on the landing exactly at the moment when he

was in the act of putting his key into the latch of his own door. He turned on hearing footsteps close behind him, and, without hesitation, I said, "Mr. Horace Wynne, I believe?"

'He looked surprised and a little startled, as he answered, "Yes, that is my name."

'I continued,

"I must apologise for presenting myself at this unseemly hour, but my business is urgent. May I beg the favour of a few minutes' conversation?"

'With some perplexity he said,

"Certainly; but what is your business? This is hardly the time. What is your name, pray?"

"You would not know it," said I; "but I come from Dolton-gardens, from Mr. Davenell's."

"O, indeed! I hope there is nothing amiss there?" he said.

"Well, yes," I went on; "there is a good deal amiss, and it is that which brings me here. If you will let me walk into your rooms, I will explain."

"You will excuse me, but how am I to make sure that what you say is true?" he urged. "This is hardly the time of night when one expects—"

"No, very likely; but see here, Mr. Wynne, this is a letter," I went on as I produced it, "which Mr. Davenell received from you this morning, or rather yesterday morning, and it is upon that subject that I come. I called here at eight o'clock this evening, and I was told you were not within, so it is hardly my fault that our interview is postponed till this inconvenient time."

'He glanced at the letter, and then said,

"Well, if what you have to say will really not keep, walk in;" and I followed him into his rooms.

'When the door was closed upon

us, I said, taking up the talk where he had left it,

"No, Mr. Wynne, what I have to say will not keep. I am here by the authority of, and to represent the father of, the young lady to whom you are engaged, and I come to demand a fuller explanation than is contained in that letter of the circumstances which led you to write it. More than that: I demand to know how you propose to account for the suspicious fact that you, as it were on the eve of your marriage, are in the habit of receiving evening visits in your chambers here alone from a lady?"

"It is useless for you to deny it: I saw you and the lady come out of these rooms but an hour and a half ago. I had been waiting on the stairs since eight o'clock with my eye upon your door, in the full belief that you were from home, as I was told. Whereas—"

"Sir," he said angrily, "by what right do you dare to tell me this; by what right do you presume to watch my movements?"

'Checking my temper, when I found I had misunderstood what it was that he was about to deny, I said,

"Now, Mr. Wynne, let us not take this tone. If you look at the case frankly and dispassionately, I am sure you will see that I have a full right to demand an explanation." And I then rapidly and briefly told him the circumstances under which I had become Mr. Davenell's envoy—of his illness; of the distress the letter had caused in conjunction with the suspicious and compromising news that he had brought home; how I had volunteered at once to clear up the difficulty if possible; what my name was; and so on. "Now," I continued, in conclusion, "I think you will see

that I have some right on my side, and am justified in the step I have taken."

'He put his hand to his forehead, walked away from the table against which we were standing, and which was covered with papers and account-books; paced to and fro at the further end of the room for a minute, as if in doubt; then turned up the gas, which was burning dimly, stirred the smouldering remains of the fire; threw himself into an easy-chair in front of it, put his hand again to his head, heaved a deep sigh, and finally motioned me to a chair. The extra light which he had thrown upon the scene enabled me more plainly to discern his features, and I saw with pain that he was evidently suffering great mental distress. He looked worn and haggard, like a hunted hound; but there was an expression of honesty and kindness in his handsome face which at once touched me. Presently he said, in an entirely altered tone,

"Since this difficulty too has become known and has been so fearfully misunderstood at Dolton-gardens, and as it seems that any further concealment of my trials and troubles is impossible, and as I suppose I may believe your account of the circumstances which bring you here, I may as well make a clean breast of it. But, Mr. Grey, allow me to say in one word that my conduct is entirely misunderstood by Mr. and Mrs. Davenell. It is open to the most complete explanation, I am happy to think, though I did not wish to have been called upon to make it.

"That unfortunate lady whose one or two visits here have created a dreadful suspicion in their and your minds, is none other than the wife of my unhappy partner. She is left, through his defalcations and knavery and

by his flight from this country, with six young children in such distress as it has never been my lot to witness before. Naturally anxious to conceal herself at this moment from the eyes of the world, she has been here to consult with me on her affairs by night instead of by day, when I too could not have received her. That is the simple explanation of her visits, Mr. Grey, and it is very easily proved. I have been endeavouring to see, by going over with her the books and papers there" (and he pointed to the table) "if anything, and what, could be saved from the wreck. My own affairs are sufficiently complicated by his villany, but this did not make me unmindful of her unprotected state. That is all.

"Now when I wrote that letter to Mr. Davenell the night before last, I had been aware of my partner's frauds and flight only a few hours, and I wrote it on the honest impulse of the moment, fully intending to-morrow to have gone to Mr. Davenell's, and to show him plainly and honestly how I stood. I don't know that I should have thought it worth while even to have mentioned the wife's visits to me; I never gave them a moment's consideration; I could not have conceived it possible that they would have been so misinterpreted; and how they can have come to his ears, or who can have been the slanderous mischief-maker, I haven't a notion. I am a ruined man, Mr. Grey. I cannot meet my engagements in the house—on the Stock Exchange, I mean—on the settling day next week. I am a bankrupt; and as if this were not bad enough, bringing with it, as it does, the wreck of all my hopes and my prospects of marriage—as if this was not enough, I say, I must be slandered—"

'The poor fellow here buried his face in his hands, and groaned aloud. It was a sad and pitiful sight, Mrs. Davenell, and I won't dwell on it. I think, however, before long I was able to shed upon it some bright ray of hope.

'Seeing that Mr. Wynne was sincere in all he was saying, feeling convinced from his distress, his look, his manner, and his words, that he was speaking the truth, I got him after a while to go into some details of his affairs. I got him to tell me by degrees exactly how much money would be necessary to tide him over and save his reputation, and I am happy to be able to tell you that that sum of money is now lodged at his bankers'.

'Ah, then, you, Mr. Grey, have been his good angel; I can see by your face!' exclaimed Mrs. Davenell, with tears starting in her eyes, whilst Nina cast at the narrator of these events such approving looks as made him feel that he was more than recompensed.

'Well,' he said hesitatingly, 'I am happy to think I was able to serve Mr. Wynne. After all it was not a very big sum, and the whole matter, except as regards his partner, is not so bad as it seemed at first; only he rather lost his head at the sudden aspect affairs presented; he was a little hasty, and took too gloomy a view of his impending difficulties. I went thoroughly into them. He will come out of them with perfectly clean hands; whilst his sympathy and efforts on behalf of his partner's unhappy wife were so earnest and sincere that he quite won my heart. He's a first-rate fellow, Mrs. Davenell, and you may be proud of him as a son-in-law, I'll stake my life upon it.'

'O, how shall we ever be able

to thank you!' chimed in the ladies together.

'But,' said the elder, 'it is so early in the day, you don't mean that you have managed matters for him already?'

'O, dear, yes. We grew tremendous friends, as I tell you; we sat over his books and papers till dawn; then he produced some breakfast, and without waiting at my rooms to do more than get a letter which I expected by the morning's post' (here Valentine looked very hard at Nina), 'I went straight to my bankers', and, in short, got him the money; and here I am.'

'I must go at once and tell Mr. Davenell,' exclaimed that gentleman's wife; 'this good news will be better than any doctor for him; it will make him quite well, I am sure. O, what a happiness, what a relief! How good, how kind you have been, Mr. Grey! I shall return directly; but mind, don't let a word for the present escape you to Emily, or Fanny especially; she must never know the distress we have been in, and the terrible mistake we fell into. But it was very natural, wasn't it? What could we think? O, dear me, I feel so excited, I'm quite in a whirl;' and the kind-hearted little lady bustled out of the room.

Directly she was gone Valentine turned to Nina, saying,

'And now, Miss Davenell, may I claim my reward?'

She did not meet his look, but answered, with scarce a show of her old hauteur,

'You have been very, very good, I admit; but I fear you must find your reward in the consciousness of having done a noble act.'

'You estimate it too highly; it does not deserve such a eulogistic description; but if you really think well of what I have done, you know who set me on, who hinted

at the prize. Miss Davenell, in one word, that prize is your hand; give it me, and let me call it mine to keep.'

He took her hand; she made no attempt to withdraw it; he kissed it fervently; and just at that moment the door opening, the pair were in full view of the sharp eyes of Fanny and Emily.

With a wicked little burst of laughter the door was suddenly closed again.

'There,' said Valentine, 'it's too late now; we have been seen.'

'You are very foolish, Mr. Grey, and unkind, to take advantage of my gratitude. I did not mean—'

'Possibly not; but *I* did from the first time I ever saw you, three years ago. I then meant to be—well, *your Valentine*, if you would take me. And it's part and parcel of the happiness and the luck which attend everybody connected with this house, that I should be able to offer myself on such an appropriate day—my birthday and my saint's. Be you my saint for the future, and it will be your day as well as mine.'

'Ah,' she answered, 'I was sure you would attempt a joke about your birthday; but this is a pretty one, and I forgive you. Still I did not think you would have condescended to have *sent* a valentine; it was quite bad enough for you to come yourself.'

'I send a valentine!'

'Yes. Here it is' (drawing a letter from her pocket); 'don't deny it.'

'But I do; and even if I don't, it was not worse for me to send one to you than for you to send one to me. Look here!'

He produced the letter that he had called for at his rooms.

'I declare I did not send a valentine to you!'

'I declare I did not send a valentine to you!'

'Then the whole thing is a mistake entirely.'

'O, I beg your pardon!'

'I beg yours!'

Once more the door opened.

'May I come in?' said Fanny.

'Yes, yes, certainly; perhaps you can put matters straight,' cried Valentine, who was now minutely and suspiciously examining the handwriting on the envelopes of the two embossed and belaced missives.

'Whose writing is this, Miss Fanny? I say they are both by the same hand.'

He looked hard at her as he spoke. She blushed.

'I believe I've found you out,' he went on:

'And have you found nothing else out, pray?' she asked significantly.

'Ah, yes; indeed I have,' he answered, turning to Nina:

'Well, then,' said that young lady, 'keep it to yourself. You kept your vigil nobly and faithfully; keep my secret until I give you leave to speak. Here come my aunt and uncle.'

'But,' said Valentine, with an appealing look in his eyes, 'you won't make me keep it long, will you?'

And as Mr. and Mrs. Davenell entered the room Nina whispered to him, in the softest tone he had ever heard from her lips, the simple word,

'No!'

IN THE ORANGERY.

A Story of St. Valentine's Eve.

I.

ETTIE WRAY was a most roguish young lady. Her truant tasted her into all kinds of frolics, for which her bright eyes and sunny smiles were not always indemnification. She had brothers, of course. What wilful girl was ever without them? The elements of mirth and mischief could not be properly developed without such an incentive to their growth. Charles, the eldest of the family, had the advantage of her in age by three years. But she gave him few of the privileges of seniority. That luckless brother was in love; worse still, he was poetical; and Ettie was not slow to discover both weaknesses. Indeed, there was little she was slow at; and that little lay rather in the region of arts and accomplishments than in the world of life and observation.

Christmas had come and departed, and had left its fruits in one way, if not in another. The stoned raisins and candied citrons were gone, but not some lingering headaches they had evoked. Ettie was the only one who had escaped, and yet she had apparently enjoyed herself more than anybody at the festal board; but her health was indubitable and her spirit unyielding. When she fell a victim to depression and doses, the medical profession would have everything at its feet.

With her cheeks rosier than ever, her eyes alight with mirth,

she darted through the house on one frosty morning in the first days of the new year.

She was in search of her brother Charles. Without him matters were becoming dull, and that was a descent from elation which she could not brook. Others were contented, perforce, to take up every-day life in its quiet garb again after the recent revels. Her father had gone back to accustomed duties; her mother looked to household matters with renewed vigilance; and her two younger brothers, despite of headaches, were set to brain-work with their tutor in the study. But Ettie had no peculiar vocation in the circle. Lesson-days were over, rules ended, and reflections not begun.

'Where *is* Charles?' she exclaimed impatiently, when she failed to find him in a small den at the top of the house appropriated to his peculiar use. He was supposed to be working solemnly for an Indian appointment in the spring, and it was calculated that the higher he was put, the more his mind would mount. About that question there might have been doubts if it had been known how often a tiny pair of feet made the ascent after him, and broke in on some mathematical problem with the quick solution: 'Things which are equal to the same are equal to each other. Now, Charles, you are equal to an emergency; so am I. Let us baffle the guard and escape together.'

At present, however, there was nothing, or rather no one, to in-

terrupt. The books were there safe enough, the inkstand steady, the compass true to its points. But the student had decamped. Ettie made a bound downwards, and followed her mother to the store-closet. There was an outcry from that thrifty matron as a basket of fresh eggs was all but overturned by the girl's flying entrance.

'Ettie, do be more careful!' she exclaimed. 'Is there nothing you can do but mischief?'

'Avoid it, you mean. I haven't cracked a shell. But, O mamma, please tell me where Charley is gone to.'

'Certainly, if I knew I should not do so, Ettie. You would be sure to distract him.'

'And is he not in the house? I thought he was to work hard to-day.'

'Of course he is somewhere, child. He promised me he would make up for lost time; but I beg you will not trouble yourself about him.'

'It is no trouble, mamma,' cried the saucy young lady. 'I like to look for him. It will be fun to find him.'

Nevertheless, as the search was prolonged, anger succeeded eagerness, and petulance patience.

'Tiresome fellow!' she murmured. 'He has done it to tease me. He is hiding from me on purpose. Then a thought dawned on her. 'Ah, the grotto!' she cried.

This was a sort of log-hut at the far end of the garden, only used in winter time as a smoking lounge, and forbidden to Charles except at an idle evening hour.

Ettie gained the retreat, ran up a step or two, and, descriing that the truant was within, broke in upon him with a startling rapidity.

He almost jumped from his seat, and something—not a cigar—fell

from his grasp. It was a J nib; a pocket inkstand was on the rustic table before him, and on his writing portfolio a sheet of pink paper was outspread. Though it seemed to him that he kept both a fixed glance and hold on this latter, it was spirited away before his very eyes. Ettie held it aloft, and soon his Muse was under the scanning gaze of an unsparing critic.

'A valentine already!' was her first comment. 'Well, Charley, you will score high in composition, at all events, unless it is to be a case of love's labour lost.'

'Ettie, give me that!' cried her brother hotly, and made a bound towards her. But she tightened her grasp. It was impossible to rescue the sheet without rending it in pieces, and he was not prepared for such a sacrifice of his tender offspring.

In a laughing voice, which gradually grew a little softened, Ettie read the stanzas aloud:

'TO "MY QUEEN."

FEBRUARY 14TH.

Though darkness fold up half our life,
Yet inner light may shine;
No spirit dwells in shadowed home
That hath its dreams divine.

Last night I stole away from gloom;
I woke in fairyland:
Methought I trod a sunlit path,
And you held fast my hand.

Deep gazed we in each other's eyes,
And smile spake unto smile;
Earth had a new-found glory won,
To dazzle for a while.

No dimming veil hid heart from heart;
Pride let its mantle fall:
One truth had filled the wide world's
space—
That "Love is all in all."

Ah, 'twas a vision—naught but this!
Its radiance now is flown:
You walk another distant path,
And I am still alone.

'Twas a mere phantom, born of these
Too swiftly speeding days;
This month, which is so "short and
sweet,"
Hopes only it may raise;

The first frail shoot of earliest flower ;
 The whisper of a joy ;
 The far-off perfume of a breath
 That hath no harsh alloy.

Yet, ere run out its magic hours,
 These lines thy gaze have sought ;
 And take them—as your heart may rule—
 As dream or waking thought.

‘Not so bad, old fellow,’ exclaimed Ettie at the conclusion. ‘Too good to be wasted after your own heart. You will let me direct your thoughts and your envelope ?’

Now it must be noted that Ettie was in love too, and with a young lady likewise. But the object of her devotion was not the same fair one who had enchained her brother Charles. At her last words, with a sudden and unexpected dexterity, the paper was rescued from her, was transferred to the portfolio, and Charles shut the latter with a clap.

‘Ettie, you are a perfect torment !’ he exclaimed. ‘I won’t have you prying after me everywhere. Whatever I may be about, nonsense is your sole study.’

‘I am going, Charley,’ said Ettie, advancing as far as the threshold. ‘Just promise me first you’ll not send those verses to Augusta Pryde.’

‘I shall send you down the steps if you don’t take care,’ was the rejoinder.

‘But how can you like her ?’ persisted the plague. ‘I can’t think what you see to admire in her. Is it her long nose ?’

The lover made a threatening movement.

‘How dare you speak that way ?’ he cried.

‘Well, it is her most prominent point, Charley. Of course I thought of it. I suppose you did too ?’

‘I have not a mind like yours, thank goodness, Ettie.’

‘But you have eyes, surely ?’

‘To see your absurdities—yes.’

‘But blinded to those of Miss Pryde.’

With these words she thought fit to beat a retreat ; for there was a flash in the orbs under discussion which showed anything but obscurity of vision.

II.

SOME weeks had gone by, and the household had been very quiet. Charles was really reading, and, strange to say, Ettie was meditating. But that was a bad omen for what might follow. She saw a great deal of her pet friend, Dora Darlington, and managed that her brother should do the same. Dora was slight and graceful in figure, with a blooming colour, soft gray eyes, and a sweet dimpled face ; a perfect contrast to the somewhat stiff form and straight features of Augusta Pryde. But the latter had gained Charles Wray’s admiration when he was a mere boy. She held him by the force of association, and his romantic turn of mind bound him to the belief that a first love must be unchanging.

St. Valentine’s-eve approached, and it was to be a night of festivities. A dinner, a drama, and a dance were to follow in succession. It chanced to be Ettie’s birthday ; and if she had her way at other times, she could be denied nothing now. She had chosen the play herself, and not without a motive. The hero was in love with two young ladies. The first was uppermost in absence. In her presence he was the slave of the second. Torn by conflicting emotions, his reveries were given to one, his protestations to the other. The shallow arts and decked-out charms of the showy heroine vanished with her disappearance from the scene, and he was haunted by

the winning ways of her more lovable rival. This wandering weakness brought matters to a climax in the end. He proposed by letter for the first lady, and the next moment, in an unexpected meeting, threw himself at the feet of the second. The plot afforded scope for some comical positions, and Ettie was delighted with it. Charles, she decreed, should be the vacillating gentleman, and Augusta and Dora the heroines. Her brother did not demur; for to act with Miss Pryde, under any circumstances, stirred the pulses of his heart. She, having looked at the part in every light, finally decided upon being the beauty of the play, the one whose personal charms called forth a present adoration. She had more to do in this *rôle*, and her dress was to be more elaborate and becoming. Pink suited her dark hair and brilliant eyes, and Ettie had that colour assigned to the lady. Dora was to be in white, and in both garb and guise was to adopt simplicity.

The night came; the stage was up, the curtain down. The mystery of the greenroom was at its height; and something else, unfortunately, too — discussion, even dissension. A firebrand had been flung in the midst of the company in the shape of a roseate dress. Ettie, it is to be feared, was still the mischievous sprite, who, flying hither and thither, as on wings herself, managed to flutter others disquietingly. Her darling Dora was a favoured exception. She came early, and was the first in every way. Her dress was perfect and was smoothly adjusted. There was not a crumple to ruffle toilette or temper. Not so with Augusta Pryde. Her pink garb was there, without a doubt, and a shade deeper than she would have desired; but there was no-

thing to soften it. Some exquisite old 'point,' which had been displayed beforehand by Ettie, and which Miss Pryde understood in some way was to be appropriated to her, hung now in graceful folds around the floating white of Dora Darlington. The young lady eyed her attire for a moment, then flushed crimson, and grasped it angrily.

'How could I wear that?' she exclaimed. 'Such a mad flaring thing, and all of the same hue! Where is the lace I was promised?'

'The lace is not far to seek,' said Ettie, glancing towards Dora. 'The promise it would be harder to light upon; I am not aware that I made any.'

'I quite thought it was to be so; I felt sure you intended it,' retorted Augusta, reddening violently. If her face grew much hotter even the warmest lover must see that pink was out of the question. The matter was the more aggravating to her vanity, as the dresses, by prior arrangement, were to be worn during the after-ball, and it was impossible now to procure another toilette. Ettie was provoking rather than pacifying with her assurances.

'You are all right, Miss Pryde,' she protested. 'Nothing could be better or more befitting. You intend to do wonders to-night, you know—set the Thames on fire.'

There was a laugh here, and Charles had to spring to the rescue. But he could only do so in a rebuke to Ettie, which that young lady heeded little, and a reassurance to Miss Pryde, which was even less regarded. Under present circumstances the great Augusta viewed him merely as the brother of Ettie, and that position kept him at a supreme distance. Dora, who was amiable, would have yielded up the lace. There was no time, however, for such

transformation, and Ettie insisted decisively that no dress can be judged of in the abstract, that there is a prior process to rejection. 'Everything must be put on,' she said sagely, 'ere it is thrown off.'

Augusta accordingly was arrayed in the obnoxious garment, and with the aid of some white flowers she toned down a little. Her countenance, nevertheless, did not clear till a new arrival came upon the scene. This was a young officer who was to act a subordinate part, but evidently he played none such in the eyes of Miss Pryde. She had often coquetted with him before, and now she turned at once a 'cold shoulder' on Charles, if such a thing were possible in glowing robes.

Meanwhile the audience was growing impatient. There was a rush of rising excitement, which threatened to lift the curtain if it were not speedily upraised in more artistic fashion. Ettie—prompter and prime mover in the performance—hurried matters forward thereupon, and the play began. The first scene opened with Augusta and Charles on the boards, and certainly the latter made as foolish a lover as could be desired. He was deplorably helpless and bewildered, and the part seemed acted to perfection. How far his merit was due to previous training or present distraction no one possibly but Ettie could determine. She had 'coached' him, and knew where he went off the track. When the running was weak she saw it at a glance, and as he grew shaky she felt that something else trembled in the balance, and trusted it was his love for Augusta Pryde. Nevertheless, the curtain had scarcely dropped when she experienced a thrill of dismay. They were all hurrying towards the retiring-

room, when Charles stole up to Augusta and pressed something into her hand. The young lady took it carelessly, and being held together with her fan and handkerchief, it dropped the next instant to the ground. Ettie snatched it up, and read these words on a slip of paper: '*Meet me, for one second, in the conservatory before the ball opens.*' She was not slow to guess what that meant. The same morning she had spied Charles in the act of arranging a few snowy camellias around a stem of pink paper, which was too prominent not to point to something. He had left the bouquet in a cool dark spot at the further end of the greenhouse, where the foliage of some orange-trees offered a supposed concealment. Its fragrance plainly was to be hidden no longer, and Ettie's hopes of her brother fell to zero.

III.

THE conservatory lay in shadow. There were no lights in it, for it was situated at the end of the library, a room not used on this night. Yet a flock of moonshine had stolen in, and plants and flowers wore a dreamy beauty in its pallid gleam. Scents seem sweeter and silence more seducing when the searching daytime is past, and the senses are enwrappt by the delicate mists of night and mystery. The dark foliage of the orangery had silvery specks as of glittering coins dancing amidst the leaves. But the moonlight was fitful. Gloom brooded elsewhere, and in that gloom stood Charles Wray. He was anxious and troubled, and a species of nervousness beset him now that the moment had approached for the presentation of the flowers he

had culled so carefully and the verses which had been so ardently penned. Augusta had shown herself uncertain of late. On this occasion she had gone a little further. There was no longer that tone to complain of, but a very definite coldness. How would she meet him now, or would she fail to grant him even this first request? Suddenly there was a sound. He moved a step forward and listened eagerly. Yes, some one had entered. There was a rustle amongst the shrubs. It was she whom he awaited. Even here the glowing pink dress shone out aggressively, but its owner had thrown a white cloud over her hair, and was thus more approachable. Charles sprang towards her, and, without a word, pressed flowers and valentine into her hand. At the same instant a startling tone rang out. It was the first burst of the dance music. It seemed like a summons, and one which could not be disregarded. The young lady turned and fled. Charles followed more leisurely, and when he entered the ballroom the full blaze of light bewildered him for an instant. He looked around then for Miss Pryde; she had probably a partner already, but ere she was engaged for everything he must put in a plea. But she had vanished, like Cinderella; not a trace of her was to be seen. The officer who had been in favour to-night was whirling around in the waltz with Dora Darlington. Yet stay, was he dreaming or dazzled? Was this Dora in the white lacy drapery who, pausing now in the dance, raised her brilliant eyes to her partner's face? Surely, surely he knew that gaze too well ever to mistake it. It was Augusta Pryde, with the same smile which she had often given to him, the same compelling glance which

had made him too long her captive. Charles felt that the play must still be going on, and that the strange metamorphoses of scenes and semblances were clouding and distracting his brain. A clear little laugh and a touch on the arm brought him to his senses. There was something in Ettie too unmistakably lifelike to let fantasies predominate, and it was she who was beside him.

'What is this?' he murmured. 'Ettie, is it your freak? Where is Augusta—Dora, I mean? What has happened to every one?'

'To yourself, you should say. We are all right, and dear Dora better than ever. Fancy! she changed dresses with Augusta, just to please her ladyship. But she is well rewarded. She looks lovely in pink.'

Ettie had turned as she spoke, and Charles followed her glance. In the embrasure of a window he discovered the gay garb, and saw that it enfolded the fairy form of Dora Darlington. But the bloom of white camellias was more apparent than all. The girl held the flowers in a sort of tender caress, and he recognised with a start to whom his offering had been made. Plainly the valentine had been already abstracted and read, for a sweet shy look drooped Dora's lashes, and the gentlest flush overspread her cheeks.

'Ettie!' ejaculated Charles, 'what have I done? Who was it came to me in the orangery?'

'Have I to tell you? O Charley, abjure poetry! You are becoming too obscure. You seem to have just dropped from the clouds, and, worse still, you drop more important matters on the ground. Luckily I am awake, and see what is to be done. I found this, and showed it to Dora. Was not that what you wished?' and she handed him his slip of

paper containing the summons to the conservatory.

Charles took it without a word. If Miss Pryde had discarded both it and him, why should he publish his own rejection? At a moment like this, when enchanting strains were floating on the air, fragrant flowers entwining overhead, and a lovely little lady awaiting a partner, he would certainly forget everything but enjoyment. Another instant and the camellias were nestling close to the donor. Dora had given him her hand for the waltz, and its touch was so pleasant and confiding that he claimed it again and again.

For the first time it struck him that, if Ettie were provoking, she might be penetrating too. Her friend, at all events, was very fair and fascinating, and he could not quarrel with her on that score.

As to Ettie herself, she was so charmed with the success of her

stratagems that she was a perfect beam of sunshine, and her cunning little head cogitated further schemes. The dance had been propitious, and she was determined to keep the ball going. Charles and Dora met often, and whether or no Ettie were the medium which effected the desired attraction, some mesmeric force was in play which none could resist. The poetical Charles yielded gradually to the spell, and allowed that there is something stronger than sentiment—the true bond of union between responsive hearts. Yet, faithful in a measure to ‘first principles,’ he persuaded himself that it was to Dora in reality that the valentine had been indited. It was she, certainly, who stood nearest to him now in dreaming and waking life; and when he won his Eastern laurels, some few months later, he laid all at her feet.

DRESSING FOR THE PARTY.

THE mistress pensive sitteth beneath the supple hands
Of the arch *soubrette*, who's smiling as o'er her work she stands,
Sweet leaflets deftly weaving within the golden hair.
Ah, why that smile, handmaiden?—that love-look, lady fair?

They say 'a fellow-feeling doth make us wondrous kind ;'
So mistress and so maiden the same thought have in mind.
A woman reads a woman : ' Ah, *his* homage you may prize ;
I'm a servant, but my lover just as dear is in mine eyes !'

So Ethel sits a-dreaming with the pearls upon her breast—
Sweet, bright-haired, blue-eyed beauty !—of the one she loveth best ;
And Annie—faithful Annie !—her own breast looks within,
And feels the 'one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.'

O Love, how great thy mastery, since high and low alike,
Touched by thy golden arrows, their proudest colours strike !
No matter, be it peasant or wearer of a crown,
Before thy mighty sceptre we all of us bow down.

Sighs Ethel, ' Ah, he loves me ; for me he will be there !
This ball to him were nothing without *one* lady fair.
Ah me, my king ! no rival can shake thee on thy throne ;
I own it, I confess it—I dress for *thee* alone !'



DRESSING FOR THE PARTY.

See the Verses.

WINTER POT-PLANTS.

HOUSE-GARDENING in winter! Why, what can there be, either to show or to do, at this dead season of the year? Plenty of both, if you are really desirous either of occupation or display. Where there's a will, there's a way.

To begin with the most unpromising materials when looked at singly—a winter group, sure to fix attention, may be formed by collecting succulent plants, and nothing else, no matter whether in or out of bloom, although bloom need by no means be absent. Aloes will occasionally send up spikes of flowers, which last a long time. *Sedum Sieboldi*, if kept back when in bud, will retain its tardy blossoms fresh until the short days begin to lengthen. Some *Echeverias* will now put forth their deep-cleft orange-scarlet bells, although they are mostly grown for their foliage, whether neatly packed in sea-green rosettes or displaying a metallic surface. But the best of winter-flowering succulents for rooms is the *Epiphyllum* (of which several varieties have been obtained), formerly *Cactus truncatus*, and which may be grown either on its own roots—the safest way—or perched aloft by grafting on a *Pereskia* stem, so as to form a 'weeper,' a miniature drooping Ash or Elm, showy and striking, but liable to perish by accident, such as the administration of too much or too little water. The taller the *Pereskia* stilt on which it is mounted, the more highly it is valued, the higher its price, and the more un-

certain is its durability. When plants on their own roots, from their pendent habit of growth, can no longer conveniently stand on a shelf, they may be raised by setting them on an inverted flower-pot, or will find a still more appropriate place on a bracket exposed to plenty of light.

Epiphyllums are of easy culture. During spring and summer keep them in your warmest and sunniest window, giving just enough water to keep up their growth without ever allowing them to flag; in which latter case, the tender tips of their branches might be burnt by sun-strokes. In September and October keep them as dry as may be, without risking dangerous drought. In November, or before, at the tip of the branches, little red points, the incipient blossoms as big as pins' heads, will appear. Give water then, moderately but regularly, until the bloom has attained its full dimensions, affording you weeks of pleasurable expectation, ending in a bouquet of bright pendent flowers, doubly precious in consequence of the flowerless time of their appearance.

Most of the succulents which you now bring to the front will, as likely as not, have to be fetched from dingy retreats, from nooks and corners, where they have accumulated quite a little stock of dust and cobwebs. They must therefore be cleaned up for their tardy Sunday after their long week of oblivion and neglect. They need so little care in summer, that probably they get none

atall. The amusement of thoroughly brightening their skins, in spite of spines and close-crowded leaves, by means of bellows, brush, sponge, and syringe, will be quite as praiseworthy an employment of your leisure as games of chess and other puzzles which lead to no visible result whatever.

Useful and attractive plants, which deserve an effort to popularise—I do not say to vulgarise—them (because pretty flowers, however common, can never become vulgar), are the Bouvardias, natives of Mexico, of which there are several species and varieties, with white, yellow, and scarlet flowers. The white-flowered Bouvardia Vreelandii was described, soon after its introduction, as being one of the most useful winter-flowering subjects ever brought into cultivation. The one most recently specially patronised by gardeners (although it was figured and recorded in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* so long ago as May 24, 1873), and called the king of the genus, is *B. Humboldtii* corymbiflora. The original *B. Humboldtii* was remarkable for the large size of its pure and very fragrant flowers, the tube being three inches in length, and the lobes of the limb an inch and a half across. Unfortunately they were sparsely produced; but in the beautiful variety corymbiflora obtained by Messrs. E. G. Henderson & Son of St. John's Wood this defect has been overcome; and while the size, purity, and fragrance of the blossoms have been retained, a stronger and more robust habit of growth has been superadded, as well as a much denser inflorescence. Its odour is delicious, being similar to that of Orange blossoms.

To form an idea of what Bouvardias are like, fancy an elegant low-branching pot-shrub, less ro-

bust and run-up-o'-legs than the Fuchsias, with bright-green oval-pointed leaves, and bunches of blossom resembling the Jasmine, except that the latter's flowers are five-rayed stars, whereas the Bouvardias have normally only four rays, although they sometimes ambitiously show five. Their blooming will commence in autumn, and every shoot will then form young flower-buds, which will continue the succession during winter. A scarlet-flowered plant beside a white-flowered one of the same size and shape make a most pleasing combination. Their perfume has been compared by a French horticulturist to that of the Tuberose on the Cape Jasmine (*Gardenia*), 'but more discreet and supportable.' Noses, like tastes and palates, differ; which is not to be wondered at if, as some philosophers hold, man has only a rudimental nose. Compare human noses with the dog's, and it will not appear extraordinary that we should not be agreed about smells. My own olfactory organs assimilate the scent of Bouvardias to that of a very quiet Honeysuckle. But the important and unquestionable fact is that it is both 'discreet and supportable.'

Two or three pots of Bouvardias bought now, in flower, will not involve a heavy outlay. Some plants may shed their leaves and go to rest, like outdoor Fuchsias, sprouting again from the root afterwards. In short, if fairly cared for with ordinary greenhouse or south-window treatment, the Bouvardias are sure to make their way as winter pot-plants in public estimation.

Nobody, in these chattings about indoor plants, shall be recommended to grow Hyacinths either in pots, beautiful as they are, or in glasses, pitiable and help-

less as they look, for the simple but conclusive reason that, while they please the eye, they plague the brain. Almost all those charming liliaceous flowers, the Hyacinth especially, exhale a perfume which, however sweet when first perceived, affects the nerves, brings on headache and loss of appetite, ending in unaccountable indisposition, its real cause being unsuspected.

Some people can support and even enjoy an atmosphere laden with hyacinthine odours; and in such cases the robust members of a family will wonder what can be the matter with their delicate and drooping sisters, not supposing that they would be cured in half an hour by a walk in the open air and the removal of the culprit plants.

Many bulbs supposed to be innocent in this respect, because no scent is perceived when they blossom outdoors, really are not so in the confined and warmer air of a living-room. Example, the annually welcome Snowdrop, of which Mrs. Barbauld wrote that it looks as if Flora, or I forget what goddess,

'By some transforming power
Had changed an icicle into a flower.
Its name and hue the *acentilata* plant retains,
While winter lingers in its icy veins.'

But bring a clump of blooming Snowdrops into the comfortable temperature which your apartments keep up in February, and you will discover that the Snowy Milkflower, *Galanthus nivalis*, so far from being scentless, gives out emanations of sufficient power to oppress your forehead with a heavy weight.

A great admirer of Hyacinths, who could not stand their smell, used to grow them in a frame in his garden, gratifying his passionate fondness of their beauty by

going to look at them twenty times a day. They can also be cultivated so as to be seen without being smelt, in a marquise or miniature outside greenhouse—a double window, in fact, with a wider space than usual between the two sashes—provided the ventilation of the room is independent of draughts from that direction. The same remarks apply to the whole *Narcissus* genus, to the Jonquil especially. Beautiful and easy to force as is the Lily of the Valley, it is open to the same objection. Less potent in their influence are the lovely blue Siberian Squill, the bright little scarlet single Van Tholl Tulip, and the Dog's-tooth Violet, both pink and white (why so named is a mystery), with its pleasing mottled foliage which alone ought to insure its acceptance as a window bulb, and the curious Fritillary or Chessboard Flower.

The less strong-smelling of the winter-flowering bulbs, as Crocuses in all their different hues, may be grown in perforated globular pots, which, in fact, might be called omnibus flower-pots, and which are not a new invention, but probably a contrivance of the Dutch, for the cultivation and enjoyment indoors of the early spring bulbs of which they are so fond.

For the two illustrative figures, and their description, we are indebted to the courtesy of the editors of the *Gardeners' Chronicle*. The perforated bulb pot, empty, is by no means inelegant in its form. If not to be obtained in the local earthenware shops, Mr. J. Matthews of Weston-super-Mare can supply it. It stands on a light saucer or circular dish, made of the same material as itself, which may be either common red flower-pot clay, or earthenware glazed and ornamented

outside with coloured designs, according to taste and intended cost. The foot is hollow, to admit of drainage from the earth inside; the globular portion is pierced with holes regularly placed in quincunx order, and sufficiently large to allow a *Crocus* placed inside to grow through the aperture, without, however, falling out; the upper orifice must be large enough to introduce the hand, for the arrangement of the bulbs inside and gradually filling

carefully and gradually watered from the top until the whole mass of earth is thoroughly moistened.



the pot with earth, which should be well pressed down to keep the bulbs firmly fixed in their places. If the bulbs are much smaller than the holes through which they are to grow, the open portion of the orifice round them must be stopped with pebbles or bits of shell, to prevent the earth from falling out. The upper orifice can be planted with a *Hyacinth*, a *Polyanthus*, *Narcissus*, or other early-flowering bulb, and may be surrounded, if there is room, with another circle of *Crocuses*, or of *Van Tholl Tulips*, *Siberian Squills*, *Dog's-tooth Violets*, or even a simple fringe of *Moss*, as represented in the second figure.

As soon as the plantation is completed, the vase should be

Some even plunge it in a tub of water, leaving it submerged for two or three minutes to make sure that its contents are unmistakably soaked. After draining a while, it is put for a month or five weeks in any dark place, neither too hot nor too cold—a cellar or cupboard or out-of-the-way closet—where the development of the root-growth will begin. It may then be brought into the warmed and lighted apartment where it is eventually to remain; but as the air of living-rooms, in consequence of the fires kept there, is drier than the spring atmosphere of gardens, the vase must be frequently and regularly watered with water of a temperature not lower than the room itself. A few broken crocks

at the bottom of the vase will allow superabundant moisture to drain away.

When the bulbs are done with, and have gone to take their summer sleep, the pot can easily be utilised by filling it with foliage plants, if not entirely reserved for that branch of culture, in which case the holes in the side of the pot are especially adapted for the reception (and for allowing them to peep out permanently) of rock-loving Ferns and those which like to grow on a surface perpendicular to the horizon—such as small plants of Hart's-tongue and its numerous varieties, of *Aspleniums* *Ruta-muraria*, *septentrionale*, and *marinum*, and above all of *Adiantum* *Capillus-Veneris*, the true Maidenhair Fern. This latter possesses the great merit of thriving in the hottest and sunniest exposure (as well as in the shade) and in the driest atmosphere, provided its roots are kept permanently moist.

Perforated pots may be made to combine the useful with the ornamental by growing in winter the materials for culinary service. Fill the holes with Carter's double moss-curl'd Parsley; the upper range may contain tufts of Thyme, common and lemon-scented alternately, both of which may be chosen with variegated leaves, silver and golden respectively. Stick a plant of Celery on the top (the fringe-leaved variety is most suitable here), surround it with young specimens of that sweetest of sweet herbs, Knotted Marjoram, and you have a group of aromatic verdure not to be despised either in parlour or kitchen or hall.

Those who like to feast on odours may try the late Mr. Smee's plan of extracting them from the atmosphere thus: When your flowers are emitting or radiating

the subtle essence or whatever it may be which constitutes perfume, take a glass funnel, whose lower outlet has been hermetically closed with a blowpipe; raise it on a stand over a bowl or other recipient, fill it with ice and salt, and set it in the midst of your odoriferous flowers. The moisture condensed on the outside of the funnel, impregnated with the perfume of the flowers, will drip into the bowl beneath. Add a few drops of pure alcohol, and, as cooks say, serve. Only be moderate in its consumption, so as not to call to mind Ovid's line,

'Crede mi, male olet qui bene semper olet'

(Believe me, he who always smells well, smells badly).

If you must have flowers in your winter window-garden, which are at the same time scented and innoxious, there are China Roses few and far between (forced Roses, Moss and others, hardly lie within the window-gardener's competence); *Mignonette* sown late (from the beginning of August to the end of September), requiring care and judgment; and winter-blooming *Violets*, of which there are several. The close of October is the time to plant, to insure flowers all winter and spring, is the hint given by Mr. Frederick Perkins, Nurseryman, Regent-street, Leamington, who makes *Violets* a specialty, and who enables you to do the same by offering, free by post, for the small price of 5s. 6d., one small plant of ten choice varieties, including the large new double white *Belle de Chatenay*. Although the time for planting is past and gone, strong winter-flowering plants well established in pots are perfectly procurable. True, the carriage of the pots makes the *Violets* come heavier, but it is better to have them late than

never. Another enterprising horticulturist, Mr. H. Cannell, announced at the close of October that a bed of Violets could be securely packed, and sent to any address, he having thousands of them in large clumps, throwing up an abundance of flowers.

Less ambitious than a bed is a box, like those for Mignonette, which may be filled with a row of *Violettes des Quatre Saisons* (the Four Seasons Violet), so largely grown about Paris for bouquets, which it supplies in abundance from September till March, when ordinary Violets come in to supplement them. How freely this variety blooms may be judged from the fact that for half a franc you can purchase in Paris, in October, a bunch of Violets as big as your fist. And Violets there are in request, not only as a political emblem, but also for their intrinsic beauty and sweetness. It would be hard if none but Bonapartists could permit themselves to enjoy such charming flowers. And it was merely by an accident that the Violet became a Napoleonic symbol. It is not heraldic for the Bonapartes. The family, according to genealogists (who may have been flatterers more or less), is mentioned in history ever since the twelfth century. The 'Nobiliaires' and the 'Livres d'Or' of the great Italian cities attest the important part played by many of its members. Their arms, sculptured on the palaces and monuments of the day, consisted of a rake surrounded with golden Lilies.

A venerable lady, now gone to her rest, who was in Paris at the time, once told me that Violets came to be emblematic of the Empire in this wise. In France there is no *fête* or rejoicing, public or private, without flowers. The bouquet is an institution. When

Napoleon I., escaping from Elba, reëntered the Tuileries on March 20, 1815, his friends naturally saluted his return with the flower of the season, Violets, in token of welcome and congratulation. From that time it continued to be the Napoleonic flower; so much so, that, after Waterloo and the replacement of Louis XVIII on the throne of France, Violets became seditious wear, dangerous to sport in your button-hole. The White Terror waged implacable war against the purple Violet. The Second Empire could hardly avoid reviving the traditions of the First, and with them Violets. The culture of the Four Seasons Violet gave flowers in quantity all the year round; what with historical and political associations added to the native merit and charm of the flower, the commerce in Violets has grown to its present great importance.

Several Violets, like not a few species of Primrose, thrive best in our climate under pot culture, in a window or frame; so-called Tree-Violets are of the number. Well deserving any care bestowed upon it is the double pale-blue Parma Violet, which will begin blooming from October onwards. Winter Violets need all the light you can give them, and to be kept as near the glass as possible, with a sufficiency of air (not a draught) when it does not freeze. Away from the light, they will make more leaves than flowers. Soil, about half leaf-mould and half fresh loam; but they are not over particular, if it is not too stiff and clayey, which is both unfavourable and inconvenient for almost all plants grown in pots.

Some of the choicer and rarer Primroses make delightful winter flowers; but they are not all so easy to grow as their simple look would seem to betoken. I will

only mention *Primula farinosa*, the Floury Primrose or the Miller's Daughter, and *P. denticulata*. Both bear tufts of numerous quite small flowers well carried up on a single stem, after the fashion of the Cowslip, which stem, with the former, is covered with white dust resembling flour, whence its specific name. Either is suitable to place, as a single plant, on a stand near the light. *Farinosa* is scarcely hardy with us, being protected at home by a thick covering of snow. Both may be planted out in spring, in a shady border, when frost is over, to be repotted and taken in again in August or September.

The Persian Cyclamen will now be offering the help of the long-continued bloom which starts from its turnip-like tuber with greater profusion the older it is. This tuber must be allowed to maintain itself well above ground, and to take its rest in the pot where it grows. I am not sure whether the Persian Cyclamen does not thrive better in a low greenhouse or a frame than in a living-room; but it does well in a house during its time of flowering. All the Cyclamens (Neapolitan, Ivy-leaved, and European) have neat foliage and a sweet and not oppressive odour. Hogarth, in his *Essay on the Line of Beauty*, took the corolla of this flower as one of his examples of a graceful curve. The cheapest, most amusing, but longest way to have Persian Cyclamens is to procure a packet of first-rate seed, sow it in an earthen pan, and rear the tubers from the size of a mustard-seed, with only one little leaf apiece, until they are big enough to flower, taking care, when pricking them out in separate pots, not to bury them too deep. The shortest way is to buy at once good-sized plants in full bloom and leaf.

They will thus cost dearer, but, as the French say, 'Times is money,' which is probably true of the *Times* newspaper also.

Some of the *Salvias* or Sages, pretty and even showy, do not bloom till quite the dead months of the year, and, when they have once begun, continue for sometime afterwards. One amongst several is *Salvia azurea floribunda*, with spikes of light sky-blue flowers, open, however, to the objection that few blue flowers are good for anything by candlelight. A winter plant with a novelistic name is *Canarina Campanula*, from the Canaries: perennial tuberous root; herbaceous stem, disappearing during a part of the year; yellow pendent flowers striped with red, produced between December and March. To succeed with it be prodigal of light and sparing of water. Nor can we omit to mention that ancient window favourite, *Coronilla glauca*, with its bright yellow flowers and sea-green foliage, from the Mediterranean basin; a provoking plant, because it holds out hopes that it might stand our winters out-doors, and it will not.

Most people like to follow the fashion. Better than following it is to forestall it. Tuberous Begonias, even as yet imperfectly known and appreciated, are sure to be the rage next season, or, if not, the season after. Now, while they are at rest, is an excellent time to obtain the tubers, and that without delay: first, because you have an early choice; secondly, to prevent their getting too dry by being kept in stock. After long drying they start into growth less freely, sometimes not at all, as happens now and then with tubers obtained from foreign growers without the least malpractice on their part. As soon as received plant them in the pots where they

are to bloom or from which they are to be transferred, with their balls of earth unbroken, into the open ground. The nurserymen's catalogues will give you an embarrassing choice of species and varieties; but do not omit to order some of the good old cheap sorts, as *B. Boliviensis superba* and *Chelsoni*. Novelties must be paid for more dearly. I do not say that many are not better than their elders; some certainly are not so good. Nevertheless, although their price is above the average, please speculate on one or two of the new double kinds, which offer the curious spectacle of single and double flowers growing on the same spray. You can hardly go wrong with *Gloire de Nancy*, *Lemoinei*, *Louis Van Houtte* (double, for there is a single variety with the same name), *W. E. Gumbleton* (ditto), and *Salmonea plena*.

In August last (p. 168) I recommended a sudden drench of quite warm water as one means of frightening a worm into quitting a flower-pot in which a plant is growing, for fear of being scalded outright the next time of watering; nor is this the only case in which a hot footbath has been prescribed for ailing plants. M. Willermoz, in the *Journal de la Société d'Horticulture pratique du Rhone*, has pointed out the utility of watering certain plants with hot water when out of health. Such waterings render repotting in fresh earth needless, when the flagging of the plants is caused by acid substances, which, contained in the soil and absorbed by the roots, act on living vegetables like veritable poisons. The small roots are withered and cease their action; consequently the upper and younger shoots of the plant turn yellow, and the spots with which

the leaves are covered indicate their morbid state. In such cases the usual remedy is to transplant the invalids into fresh soil, clean the pots carefully, secure good drainage, and so on, often with the best results. But the experience of several years has proved the unfailing efficacy of the simpler treatment, which consists in watering abundantly with hot water at a temperature of 50° Réaumur (about 145° Fahr.), after stirring well the earth in which the plants are growing until the water runs well through the pots. At its first experimental application the water came out clear; afterwards it was sensibly tinged with brown and gave an appreciable acid reaction. After this thorough washing the pots were kept warm close to a stove or a calorifère. Next day the leaves of two *Ficus elastica* so treated ceased to droop, the spread of black spots on their leaves was arrested, and three days afterwards instead of dying the plants had recovered their normal look of health. Very soon they made new roots, immediately followed by vigorous growth. In large towns especially this course of treatment is easier to carry out than a general repotting. Perhaps the extra warmth may be as efficacious as the extra water.

It is certain that many even of our native plants not only bear but like and luxuriate in more heat than they habitually get. Witness the grateful return they will make for the shelter of a frame or a greenhouse. I have seen the true Maidenhair Fern growing between stones that edged the basin of a hot spring, and so near the source of heat that one would fancy its roots must be capable of bearing a perennial stewing.

E. S. D.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE MOLE CRICKET OBTAINED A LIGHT.

THE mole cricket passed me, and went back through the passage by which we had just come. I remained alone, wondering what idea had struck her, and how she would manage to light her room. I waited some time, but at last a pale bluish light, which became gradually brighter, seemed to shine from the walls of the passage. Then the mole cricket came into the room where she had left me, followed by a little scintillating light.

'Ah,' I cried, 'a glowworm !'

'Hush !' whispered my cousin, in my ear ; 'call him Firefly ; the expression worm might annoy him.' Then in a louder voice, 'Dear cousin, let me introduce you to one of my best friends, who is so good as to put himself to some inconvenience on your behalf. You see,' she added, laughing, 'that my old head can still strike out a

bright idea now and then. Make each other's acquaintance whilst I go and take a peep into my larder ; you must be hungry. Don't be taken in by his masculine ways,' the mole cricket whispered to me ; 'he is of my sex, but for some reason or other, I'm sure I don't know what, he wishes to disguise it. Don't let out that you know it.'

On that she left us. I made a few polite remarks to the glowworm, who replied in very friendly terms. I saw at once that she was no common insect ; her courteous mode of expressing herself showed that she was used to good society. Her aristocratic manners, her dignified bearing, and a certain melancholy of expression were very prepossessing. I felt drawn towards her at once, and it seemed to me that the attraction was mutual.

To humour her fancy, and also

to please my cousin, I respected her *incognito*; so my readers must not be surprised that I used masculine pronouns in addressing her.

We exchanged a few conventional remarks, as people do when they meet for the first time. She asked me no questions, and I admired her discretion.

All this time my cousin was busy getting supper ready for us. She had fetched several things out of a hole which served as her pantry, and placed them in the middle of the room. With no little satisfaction, for I was getting very hungry, I noticed several larvæ of cockchafers and weevils, trophies of my hostess's skill in hunting, and a certain brown object, the nature of which I could not at first make out.

'Come, friends, come to supper; the food is all fresh and choice. I particularly recommend these tender cockchafer larvæ; they are great delicacies, and taste delicious.'

I did not need any pressing. We were silent for some time, busy in appeasing the pangs of hunger. Now and then we heard the rumbling of the thunder, the sound deadened by the layer of earth between us and the surface of the soil. We could also distinguish the dull dripping of the heavy rain on the strawberry-plants, and I mentally congratulated myself on my luck in finding such a pleasant shelter in the very nick of time. Besides these natural noises, I heard another which rather puzzled me. It was a kind of continuous rustling, like that produced by the rain, only it seemed to come from the very bowels of the earth at no great distance from us. I was going to ask the mole cricket about it, when she suddenly raised her head and made us a sign to be silent. I

thought she was listening to the noise which had attracted my notice, and I looked at her inquiringly, pointing to the place from which it seemed to come.

'No,' she said, after a moment's hesitation, 'I thought I heard something else; the noise you are thinking of comes from a neighbouring wasps' nest.'

'A wasps' nest! Then we are not safe here.'

'Don't be alarmed, dear cousin; the wasps are at home and we are at home. There is no communication between their house and mine; and unless we go to look for them—which we shall take pretty good care not to do—we have nothing to fear from them.'

'But you seemed nervous a minute ago.'

'Ah, yes; but for another reason. I thought I heard a mole, but I was mistaken.'

'A mole! Are there any hereabouts?'

'I am afraid there are. But go on with your supper, for another danger may threaten us in another quarter of an hour. We may be overtaken by the flood, and then we shall have to decamp in double-quick time.'

We hastened to finish our meal, and I thought to myself that my delight at finding myself in safety in my cousin's home had been a little premature; for there was no denying that the dangers of my present situation, though of a novel description, were none the less serious. As a natural result of these reflections my thoughts flew back to days gone by, to the happy carelessness of my early life, and then to my quarrels with my brothers; to the terrible event which had broken in upon the previously even tenor of my peaceful existence, to the various incidents of the evening; and I wondered what unknown experiences still

awaited me in the hazardous course marked out for me by Fate.

'You are pensive, dear cousin. Perhaps you have something on your mind? But a truce to all melancholy thoughts. I would

offer you some strawberries if the season were not so far advanced. Come, eat this spider; it's a tid-bit not to be despised.'

As she spoke the mole cricket took the brown object I had no-



ticed at the first, and pushed it towards me. It was neither more nor less than a spider.

'Thank you,' I said, 'I don't want anything more. But tell me how you come to have spiders on your table. This one is of the epeira, who spend all their lives on

trees, and I don't suppose you have climbed to fetch it from one.'

'No; truth to tell, I found it when I was rummaging about underground.'

'Underground! And what was it doing there?'

'It had been buried there.'

'You are making fun of me, cousin; since when have spiders buried their dead?'

'To begin with, the one you have there is not dead; and moreover it was not buried by spiders.'

'What! it is not dead?'

'Certainly not; it is only paralysed. It has been pricked and buried by a sphex. But you had better ask Firefly; he knows all about it.'

Firefly bent his head in token of acquiescence.

Turning again to my cousin, I begged her to explain this mystery.

'There's not the slightest mystery,' she replied. 'You know what ichneumons are?'

'O, yes; I've often seen them. They are winged insects with long thin bodies, generally barred with red and black. When I was a child I was told to avoid them. To own the truth, though, I never knew why. Afterwards I forgot all about the warning, and I am still at a loss to understand why it was given to me, for I have never been in the least annoyed by any of these insects.'

'Of course not with all that armour on. They don't trouble me either; but it's different with creatures whose bodies are not as well protected as ours. You must know that ichneumons—the females at least—wage war to the death against all other insects. They are of every form and colour—many, as you say, red and black. The big ones, such as the pimpla, hunt for caterpillars and large larvæ; the small ones, such as the alysia, oxyurus, are always on the look-out for plant-lice and small larvæ. But observe, they don't eat them; they only want them to lay their eggs in their bodies, which they do after piercing them with a kind of

sting or dart with which they are provided. The worms which come out of these eggs get under the skin of their victims, and they prey upon them alive.'

'How horrible!'

'You have no idea what an immense number of insects, especially of caterpillars, which are their favourite prey, are destroyed by ichneumons.'

'And what an awful death! But I don't see what that has to do with—'

'You'll soon know. The sphages, such as the crabro, the pompilus, and philanthus, are relations of ichneumons. Like them they deposit their eggs in the bodies of other insects, but before doing so they paralyse them by inoculating them with a venom which benumbs without killing them. That done, they bury them. Their object in acting thus is to prevent their victims from escaping their dreadful fate before the hatching of the egg and the birth of the grub which is to devour them.'

'I begin to understand. But at least their way of going to work is less cruel than that of the ichneumons; their benumbed victims do not suffer.'

'You are mistaken,' cried the glowworm; 'though paralysed, and unable to make the slightest movement, they have not lost all feeling, and are still sensible of what is going on about them. I was once the victim of a sphex; yes, I who am now addressing you.'

'Nonsense!'

'It's true enough.'

'It seems incredible.'

'You may well say that, but my case was quite exceptional.'

'Tell us about it.'

'With pleasure.'

'I think it was about the end of last month. At all events I

came out one morning from beneath the stone which served me as a shelter during the day, and was wandering about among the plants, when I felt a prick on my back, and looking up I saw a sphex hovering above me. I had no time to wonder what had happened to me, for I at once sank into a state of such entire prostration that I could not stir a limb. Thus benumbed I was buried by the sphex, together with a spider and a caterpillar. We each had an egg glued to our skin, and I know perfectly well that from this egg would proceed a grub which would feed upon my flesh. It was, as you may imagine, a terrible situation. My lamp shed a feeble light in the tomb where I lay with my companions in misfortune. Like myself they knew the fate which awaited them; I could see it in their looks, the only means of communication between us. I can tell you we exchanged glances full of horror. A few days—days of agony unutterable, of which even now I cannot think without a shudder—passed by in this state of terrible anticipation. Then I saw the eggs on the bodies of my companions gradually open, and a frightful worm came out of each and crept beneath its victim's skin. The poor creatures' eyes expressed the greatest horror and suffering, but they could not move. A similar fate awaited me. I gazed upon my egg, and could not look away from it. Every instant I expected to see it move, and to know that the awful moment for the hatching of the worm had arrived. Now it seemed to be swelling, to be crushing me with its weight, now to be burning into me. I had an acute, smarting, intolerable pain in the part of my body to which it was attached. The least movement from me

would have been enough to get rid of it, and yet I could not make that movement. But the egg did not open; my sufferings were all mental, all purely the result of my excited imagination—none the less terrible for that, though—and they became so intense that I finally lost consciousness.

'How long I remained insensible I do not, and probably never shall, know. When I came to myself the situation was but little changed: the half-devoured corpses of my companions emitted a horrible odour; my lamp still burnt feebly, and my egg, still attached to my body, was not hatched. Mechanically I made an effort to tear it off, and found to my surprise that my torpor was gone. The egg rolled right away from me!'

'And with one bound,' broke in the mole cricket, 'he was on his feet, in an instant he was buried in the soft earth forming the walls of his tomb, and soon he had forced his way to the surface of the ground. Another moment and he was saved. A narrow escape you had, too; your egg was a bad one, though not for you, of course. Now, cousin, do you understand?'

'Perfectly. So this spider—'

'Has been pricked by a sphex, like our friend Firefly.'

'It has an egg on its body?'

'Just so. Look, there it is between its forelegs.'

So it was, I could see it; and when the glowworm caught sight of it he flung himself upon it in a regular rage and scrunched it between his jaws, telling us that the remembrance of his days of agony had aroused all his old hatred of spheges and their offspring.

'The spider is saved, then?' I inquired.

'Of course it is.'

'It will wake from its torpor.'
'Not a doubt of it now that the egg is gone.'

'Well, Firefly, you have just done it a great service, you have earned its gratitude.'

'But I have done something too, cousin; I think I helped to save its life. Didn't I disinter it from its tomb? But for me its doom would have been consummated.'

'All very fine, friend,' I whispered to my cousin; 'only don't forget you offered it to me to eat, and of course it heard you; it *must* have heard.'

'So it must. I have a great mind to eat it up.'

'No, no, spare it. It will be so glad to come to life again, that it will bear you no malice. Besides, spiders have the most refined feelings. This one would not think of blaming you for acting as it would probably have done in your place.'

'Well, cousin, have your own way.'

I examined the spider we had just saved from death. I drew out her legs one after the other, and found that they retained all their flexibility. I also saw that the eyes of the spider were full of intelligence, a fact I had not before noticed. She was a very fine specimen. I dragged her into a corner of the room, and there left her to recover her senses.

'Now that you have had some food,' said the mole cricket to me, 'you must tell us your story. I shall be glad to learn to what circumstances I am indebted for the pleasure of receiving you here. Do you live near?'

'Not very. The journey took me an hour, but I was a good deal delayed. I could have done

it in half the time if I had walked quickly and without stopping.'

'What, a whole hour? Quite a journey, to be sure. You were not just taking a walk, then?'

'No; the fact is, I am a regular vagrant, with no settled residence.'

'You must be in fun.'

'A fugitive without hearth or home.'

'A fugitive! pray how is that?'

'I am speaking the exact truth. I have left home never to return. I will tell you the reasons which led me to take this important step, but I shall have to go a long way back.'

'We are all attention.'

I gave the mole cricket and glowworm a faithful account of my life. I told them, without omitting anything, the whole chain of events which had forced upon me the necessity of leaving my birthplace, my feelings at parting from my home, the various incidents by the way, to the moment when my cousin's paw laid on my shoulder frightened me so much. 'Now,' I wound up, 'I am going to seek for some quiet spot where I can settle; but I really have no fixed plan of any kind.'

'Well,' said the mole cricket, 'it is no use doing anything to-day, we'll talk about it to-morrow. Meanwhile, let us rest; the storm is over, and there is no longer any danger of our being swamped. Firefly, it's too late for you to go home; spend the night here.'

The glowworm consented, and I was by no means sorry to sleep for a few hours, and to get over all my excitement and fatigue. We settled ourselves comfortably, and the most profound silence soon reigned in our subterranean apartment.



CHAPTER IV.

A CHAT.

NOTHING occurred to disturb our repose. The night passed over quietly. When I woke, everything was just as it had been when I fell asleep. Firefly's lamp was still lighting up our dining-room, now converted into a dormitory; it was impossible to guess the time, as I observed to the mole cricket, who had also just woke up.

'It is day,' she replied; 'you can go out and say good-morning to the sun whilst I get breakfast ready.'

'I should like to know how you can tell that it is day.'

'Easily enough. My neighbours the wasps let me know that. Don't you hear the noise they are making? It's the same every morning.'

'Well, I'll take your advice and go out for a minute. Which

of these passages shall I take? This is the one we came in by yesterday, isn't it?'

'Yes; follow it—you can't go wrong.'

I turned into the passage alluded to. It soon became pitch dark; but I walked straight on without fear of going wrong, for there were no side-turnings. I couldn't help coming out at the end opposite the subterranean room, or in other words, in the open air.

As I expected, I soon made out a faint glimmer of light; the passage became less and less dark, and at last I reached the entrance. A few steps more, and I was in the broad garden-path.

It was a delicious morning. The sun, bathed in rosy vapour, was just above the horizon; the air, laden with balmy fragrance,

had all the invigorating freshness peculiar to the first hour of dawn. The only traces of the storm of the previous evening were a few pearly drops of moisture sparkling on the strawberry-leaves.

I greeted the orb of day with joyous chirps. All my gloomy fancies had vanished, and the future seemed *couleur de rose*; so entirely do the impressions we receive depend, not on our actual situation, but on the mood we happen to be in at the time.

Engaged in this and other similar psychological reflections, I reëntered the passage to rejoin my friends, and breakfast with them.

Firefly was now awake, and had been placed by the mole cricket in the centre of the room, and they were only waiting for me to begin breakfast.

My morning walk had given me an appetite; and after exchanging a few polite words with the glowworm, I lost no time in doing justice to the dishes set before us by our hostess. These dishes were much the same as those we had had for supper.

I asked the mole cricket if she had any trouble in getting them.

'None whatever,' was the answer. 'The place I live in is well stocked with the larvæ of cockchafers. You know that the grubs of those insects are very fond of the roots of strawberries and lettuces, and my parents were quite right to settle me in this strawberry-bush. Besides, the garden we are in contains a great variety of plants and shrubs, and supports a considerable number of weevils and golden beetles, which, as you know, bury themselves in the ground to undergo their metamorphosis. The soil is literally riddled with larvæ and pupæ of every kind, and I live in the midst of abundance.

But there are two sides to every question, and my prosperity has its drawbacks. I can't enjoy it in peace. Moles and shrews come to poach on my preserves; and if I fell into their paws, there would soon be an end of me. Fortunately I am very keen of hearing. I am always warned of their approach in time, and am ready at once to take refuge in my galleries, which are too narrow for them. My only fear is that I may be surprised at night; but I sleep with one eye open.'

'You have no other dangers to fear?'

'O, yes, I have. The gardener of the place has taken a dislike to me. He imagines that I damage his plants, and lays to my charge the mischief done to the strawberries by the grubs of cockchafers. The other day, close by here at the entrance to one of my galleries, I found an earthen pot buried; and so placed that I should certainly have tumbled in if I had not been looking where I was going. Once at the bottom I could never have got out again. It was only the day before yesterday that that might have happened.'

'Have you any brothers and sisters in the neighbourhood?'

'Yes; our family is pretty numerous. I should say that there are some twenty of us settled about here.'

'Do you see each other sometimes?'

'One of my sisters visits me now and then. She is a very amusing talker, and it is a great pleasure to me to see her. I was looking out for her at my door when you dropped from the sky yesterday evening.'

'And there's a wasps' settlement close by too?'

'Yes.'

'Very unpleasant neighbours.'

'O, I don't visit them, at least not of my own free will.'

'Have you ever visited them against your will?'

'Well, yes, I have.'

'Pray explain yourself.'

'One day when I was making a gallery I very nearly fell head foremost into their nest.'

'A slip which might have been serious.'

'They didn't see me, luckily. I retired without venturing on more than one look through the hole I had made in their wall.'

'What did you see?'

'A very curious sight. I saw an immense hole in which hung some dozen horizontal terraces arranged in rows one above the other, and connected together by what I may call little pillars. These terraces consisted of a vast number of little cells, each of which seemed to contain a grub, the larvæ of the wasps, in fact. A number of wasps were busy feeding these grubs, whilst others were working hard at the construction of new cells. I saw all that at a glance, you understand, and did not linger to watch them, for I did not feel quite at my ease. I hurried off, after patching up the hole I had made in their wall, as best I could.'

'Was the wall easy to pierce?'

'O, yes, easy enough. It was a kind of crust of moderate thickness, consisting of about a dozen thin layers with spaces left between them.'

'Are there very many wasps in the nest? I inquired.'

'A great many—several thousands at least.'

'Do they pass the winter under ground?'

'Yes; but a great many perish in the autumn. A catastrophe might overtake my neighbours any day.'

'What do you mean?'

'They were very ill advised to settle here. One of these fine mornings the gardener will serve them a trick.'

'What trick?'

'O, he'll come before sunrise and pour some suffocating liquid, of which I don't know the name, into the opening of their nest.'

'You mean benzoin,' murmured Firefly.

'After that he will put a pot turned upside down over the opening, and quietly take himself off.'

'And how about the wasps?'

'They will all die. I shall hear them making a terrible hubbub in their nest for some little time; but that hubbub will gradually die away till it is succeeded by complete silence, the silence of the grave.'

'How awful!'

'Of course it is; but what would you have me do?'

'You might save them.'

'By scraping out another passage for them?'

'Yes.'

'Thank you. I shall take good care how I do that. I should be their first victim.'

'Not if you told them at once that you had come to warn them.'

'Bosh! I tell you they would murder me at once. Can you reason with wasps? with angry wasps, too; for of course they'll be enraged when they find their retreat cut off.'

'Suppose you were to warn them at once of the danger which threatens them.'

'They would treat me as an old fool, and send me to the right-about, telling me to mind my own business. You don't know what wasps are. They think themselves infinitely superior to us.'

'They are like bees for that. There was a burdock near my home, on the flowers of which

bees often settled. I made advances to them sometimes, but they were almost always ill-received. Some did not answer at all. Others called me a drone, a good-for-nothing lazy fellow; and a few, more polite, said they had no time to stop chattering. In short, I found that if they had their good qualities—and I really think they are intelligent, active, and industrious—their bad temper quite counterbalanced them.

'Their temper is very bad; they are touchy, passionate, and revengeful. But wasps are even worse.'

'It's evident,' I said, laughing, 'that they won't get much sympathy from you.'

'They really are nothing to me. I have never had anything to do with them, I only speak from hearsay. If they are molested, let them defend themselves. I sha'n't meddle with them; they must help themselves as best they can.'

'Well, perhaps you are right. But why does the gardener bear them a grudge?'

'O, for several very good reasons. First of all they eat his peaches, grapes, plums, pears—all his best fruits, in fact. Besides, when the master of the place is at table with his family, they do not hesitate to go and taste all the dishes. They buzz about the mistress's head, they buzz about the children. The mistress starts and screams with terror, so do the children. The master jumps up, and lays about him right and left with his napkin. In fact, their effrontery causes a great deal of trouble at meals.'

'One would think,' I observed, laughing, 'that you had been present at some such scene.'

'I never saw it myself; but a friend of mine, a large blue-bottle fly who has often done so, de-

scribed it to me just as I have told it to you.'

'And he was right,' said the glowworm; 'that is exactly what happens. I lived in the dining-room of the house for a week myself once, and I was often witness of just such a scene.'

'What! you lived in the house? Whatever were you doing there?'

'O, I was there by no wish of my own. The master's children were attracted by the light of my lamp, so they took me and put me in a glass on the mantelpiece. I immediately extinguished my lamp, and the next day the glass was put back on the sideboard, and I was forgotten. A few days afterwards, however, the housemaid caught sight of me when she was dusting the nicknacks on the sideboard. She at once threw me on the floor, at the same time raising her foot to crush me. Fortunately I fell into one of the cracks of the boarding, and so escaped death. When night came on, I managed to slip out of the house, and got home again. It was time I was set at liberty, for I was half dead with hunger.'

'You have had some adventures, Firefly?'

'I have indeed. I could tell you of plenty more. One day I found myself in the jaws of a beetle, which was carrying me off with the evident intention of devouring me; and it was by the merest chance that I escaped. As he ran along, my beetle came full tilt against another giddy fellow of his own species, who was hastening in the opposite direction. The two rogues began to quarrel, and I took advantage of it to save myself.'

'Dastardly race!' I growled between my teeth.

'Friend Firefly,' said my cousin, 'you will come to a bad end.



But would any one in his senses wander about at night in an unsafe neighbourhood with a lighted lamp. What an extraordinary fancy it is! Can't you walk without a light, like the rest of the world?

'It has been the custom in our family from time immemorial,' replied the glowworm.

'Don't tell me about your time immemorial. Is there a single good reason for keeping up the custom? For my part I can't see the use of it; on the contrary, it seems to me most dangerous.'

'There is one very obvious reason?'

'And what might that be?'

'It serves as a signal.'

'I don't understand.'

'A beacon then, if you prefer it.'

'For your enemies?'

'O, no; quite the reverse.'

Firefly was evidently annoyed at the persistence with which my

cousin plied him with questions about the use of his lamp.

The mole cricket opened her eyes very wide at her friend's last sentence, and the glowworm looked rather confused at the admission which had escaped him; it was easy to see from his manner that he would gladly have retracted his words.

Our hostess gave him a very derisive look, and then, turning to me, burst into a roar of laughter.

I had already noticed that my cousin, though a worthy creature enough in other respects, was not gifted with too much tact or polish of manner. She was, however, too good-natured to press the subject, and only answered,

'All that is very interesting, my dear friend, very interesting, and very poetic. Far be it from me to deny that it's very poetic indeed; but, mark my words, it will be misinterpreted.'

'Very possibly. But were you not telling us just now about your own vagaries? Have they not twice nearly led to fatal results? Every one has his fate. I have seen many creatures perish whose habits were far more prudent than mine; so I shall just go quietly on my way till my hour comes.'

'I see,' I observed, 'that you are something of a fatalist and quite a philosopher.'

'Yes; much observation and reflection have made me both.'

'Your wisdom and the poetry of your sentiments appear to me equally admirable.'

'Misfortune has matured my judgment.'

'What on earth are all these fine words about?' broke in the molecricket. 'Come, cousin; come, Firefly, have some more breakfast; you must both be hungry.'

'More breakfast! Why, we've only just done eating! I'm not a bit hungry.'

'Well, please yourselves, but I am going to have some more.'

'How many meals do you take a day?'

'A dozen at least—generally more—twenty at the most; my appetite is always equally good.'

'My goodness, what a digestion! You must spend your life in eating.'

'You've hit it exactly, cousin, and you might do worse.'

'O, yes, of course. Don't imagine for a moment that I meant any reproach; I was merely expressing my admiration of your turning your time to such good account. But now I must take my leave, and go and sing to the sun. You'll come with me, Firefly.'

'I regret extremely that I cannot accept your kind invitation,' replied the glowworm; 'but I never go out except in the evening; never have done so, in fact, since my adventure with the sphex.'

(To be continued.)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER II. ALPINE ROADS AND PASSES.

SWITZERLAND and the Alps are the central point of mid-Europe, and form the natural barrier between France in the west and Austria in the east, while at the same time they make a clear line of demarcation between north and south.

There is one peculiarity about the Swiss Alps which is not seen to the same perfection in any other mountain-country. It is this: the crests of her mountain-ranges are not of uniform height all along, but are interrupted by numerous great gaps or depressions, through which it is easy to cross from one side of the chain to the other. Another peculiarity is the shape of the valleys, which, though often many thousand feet above the level of the sea to start with, slope gradually upwards till they reach the most elevated regions. Here, instead of losing themselves or terminating in an impassable wall of rock, they offer a means of communication with the other side of the ridge by leading up to those mountain-gates or portals which we call *Passes*, *Cols*, or *Forks*. The roads through these passes sometimes serve to connect merely two neighbouring districts, while in other cases they may lead diagonally across a whole range of mountains and unite different nations, such as the German and Italian. Their value for purposes of traffic varies, the most important being those splendid artificial roads, to construct which much money has been expended and the science of the engineer taxed to the utmost. The mind

is filled with astonishment when we see how man has forced his yoke upon Nature, in the shape of the suspension-bridges he has flung so boldly across abysses, which it makes one giddy to look at; how he has looked to the heights above and to the depths beneath, and has built buttresses and galleries as a protection against the threatening avalanche and the violence of the torrent; what sudden bends and turns the road takes, here skirting the rock, there piercing it, but, under all circumstances, carefully secured against any sudden outbreaks of the powers of Nature, which are lying dormant indeed, but not destroyed. Schiller's beautiful mountain-song contains a description of just such a road as this, given in a few broad bold touches:

'The giddy bridge leads o'er the darksome
abyss,
'Twixt life and 'twixt death it doth
hover,
By menacing giants the lone path is
barred,
Who thee with destruction may cover;
And wouldst thou the slumbering
lion not wake,
This journey of terrors in silence
thou'lt make.'

The narrower roads, however, along which vehicles of small size are continually rattling from one Alpine valley to another, are of considerable importance so far as the lighter traffic is concerned; so too are the *bridle-paths*, where there is only just room for the sure-footed beast of burden to make his way with his pack; others, being mere *mountain-paths*, made irrespective of obstacles, and leading across difficult



A GUIDE FROM THE ENGADINE.

and dangerous glaciers, are of no use to any but the herdsman, hunter, smuggler, and suchlike fleet and nimble folk.

Lastly, many a road has been

swallowed up by the glaciers or has fallen into disuse; nevertheless, the number of mountain-passes open at the present day must amount to nearly seventy,

and along some of the most important of these we will now take our way.

Communication along the Alpine chain, east and west, is maintained by the beautiful Valais road, which runs along the valley of the Rhône, crosses the celebrated Furka Pass, traverses the Urserenthal, climbs the Oberalp Pass, skirts the Oberalp Lake, whose waters form one of the sources of the Reuss, and so enters the Grisons. Another road, also bearing east and west, starts from Chiavenna, and, after crossing the wild Maloja Pass, from which there is an extensive view of the beautiful Val Bregaglia, runs by the side of the lovely green Inn, which intersects the Upper and Lower Engadine, and turns off at the defile of Finstermünz, through which the river passes from Switzerland into Tyrol. On the other side the frontier, both road and river continue their course through imperial territory under the mighty protection of Austrian fortresses old and new.

Throughout her luxuriant spring and rich summer, beautiful Valais is pervaded by breezes from Italy, and many a road leads down into the latter country; as, for instance, the bridle-way across Col Ferrex, the Pass of the Great St. Bernard, that of the Matterjoch or St. Théodule* (which is the highest in Europe and not passable at all times), the Griespass, and a road turning off from it to the ridge of the Nüfenen,† the Pass of St. Giacomo, and the splendid artificial road across the Simplon.

Of the above routes, that by the Griespass is especially interesting, and much favoured by tourists; but the most important is that across the Simplon, which is

of world-wide fame and reputation. If the traveller proposes to cross the Griespass, supposing him to start from the Lake of Geneva or Lake Constance, and pass through Chur (Coire), he will leave the great Valais road at Oborgestelen and descend into the Eginenthal, where, some way farther on and before he reaches the Gries, he will see a path which strikes off to the left, and leads over the Nüfenen Pass. On reaching the summit he crosses the Gries glacier, and then descends into the miserably poor and bare-looking valleys of Bettelmatt and Morast, from which he is led by the wildly romantic and beautiful Val Formazza into the valley of Antigorio, where he finds himself in the midst of Italian vegetation. Thence he may proceed to the thoroughly Italian town of Domo d'Ossola, and so onwards, farther and farther into the smiling land of Italy.

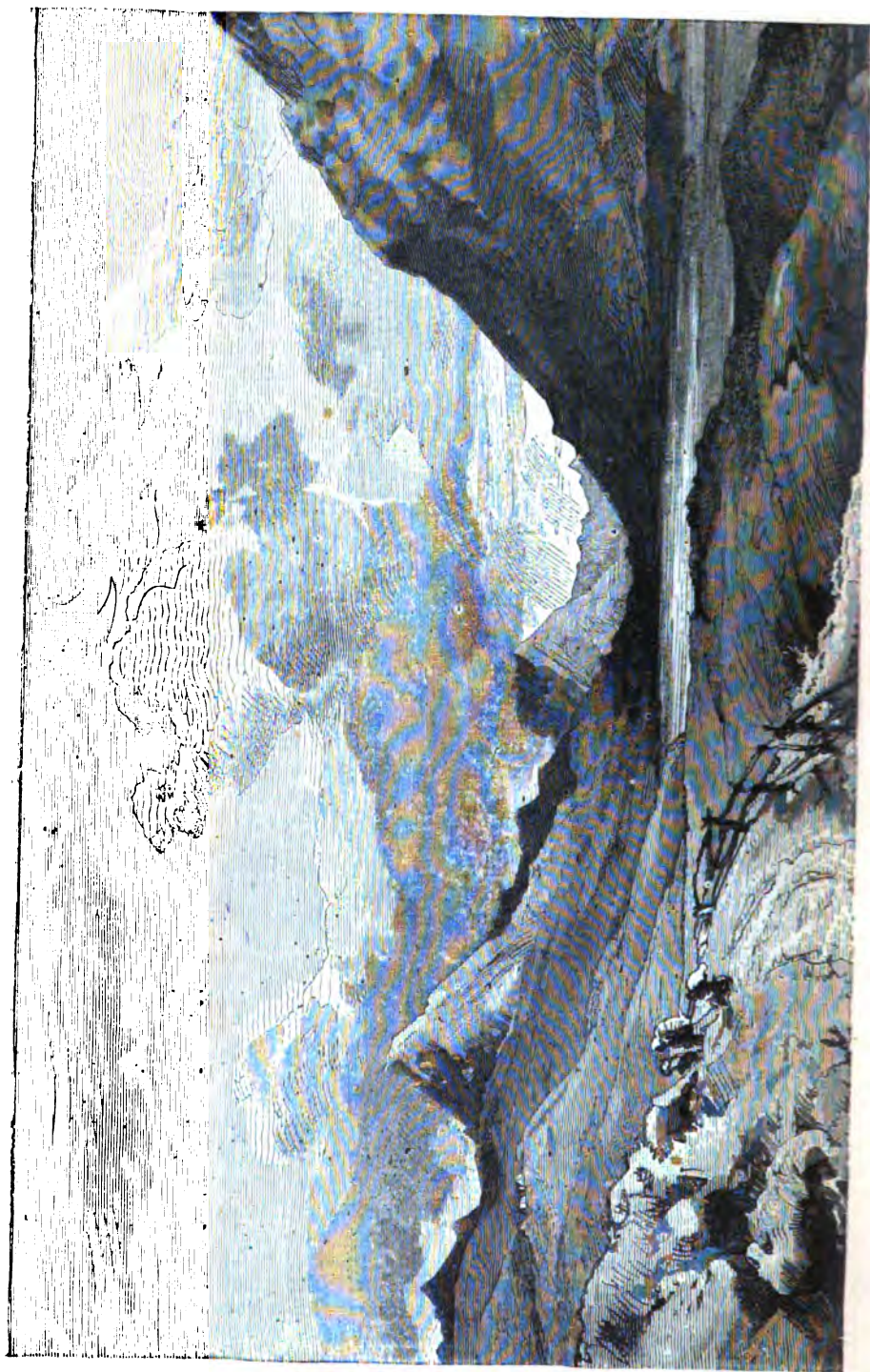
The Simplon comes next, and of it we may say,

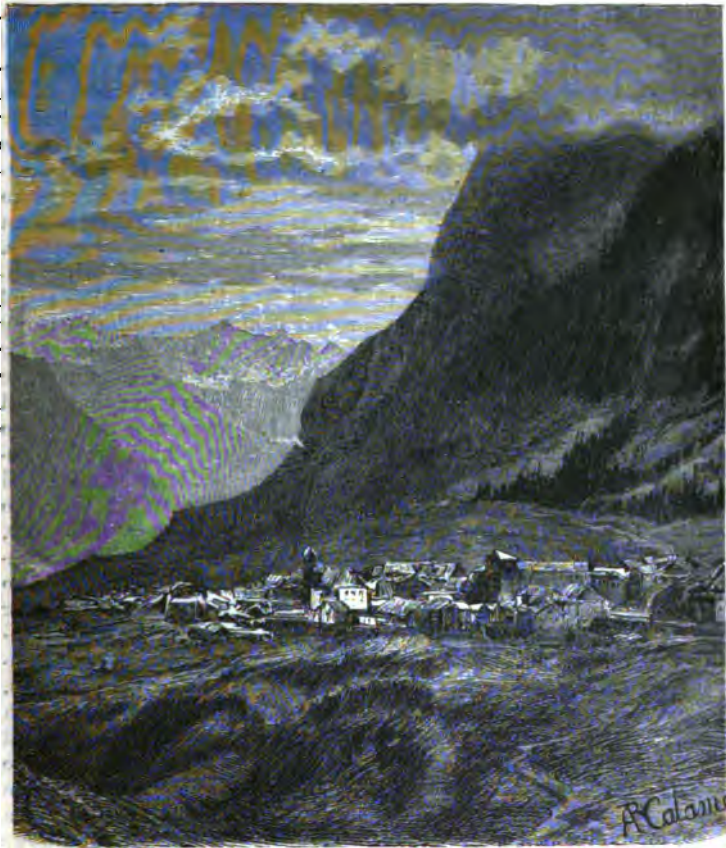
‘All who have crossed it
Have had their cup of joy filled to overflowing.’

Planted exactly between Piedmont and La Valais, it bears aloft upon its mighty back one of the finest of all the Alpine roads—that, namely, which starts in the valley of the Rhône from the pleasant little town of Brieg, whose tin cupolas are so conspicuous. Like the road over the Gries, just described, it leads to Domo d'Ossola; but this is the queen of Alpine roads, and strides like a Titaness over the cliffs and through the cliffs, across the slopes, by the side of waterfalls, along the edge of precipices, and over nearly three hundred bridges, larger and smaller. The grand idea of constructing this colossal road sprang from the fertile brain of the first Napoleon, who, like a second

* Also called Mont Cervin.

† Called Passo di Novena on the Italian side.





SIMPLON.

Hannibal, wanted a way by which his guns and guards could pass over into Lombardy. Like many another Alpine pass, it has been watered with blood, and ambition and lust of conquest have many a time made it the scene of strife. It is much frequented, owing to its grand and picturesque scenery; and in the height of summer foreigners of all nations pour across it in troops on their way to Italy.

Man has had little or nothing to do, on the other hand, with the construction of the passes across the Bernese Alps, which have

merely been worn by the use of centuries, and are still nothing but bridle-paths, steep, toilsome, and stony. They are the Col de Pillon, Sanetsch, Rawyl, Gemmi, and Grimsel. The two latter are in everybody's mouth. Every one is sure to have crossed the Grimsel, and those who have penetrated a little farther into Switzerland are sure to have ascended or descended the wonderful Gemmi. In fact, both passes are sure to be always alive with tourists; for one must cross them in making the great oval 'Around the Jungfrau,' as Zittel terms it in the

pleasing little book he calls by this title.

On leaving Interlaken, where you can see the proud Jungfrau beckoning you enticingly southwards, you turn either east, along the beautiful lake of Brienz, past the soft loveliness of Meiringen, up the valley of Hasli, with its rustling pines and the wild Aar rushing through its midst, and ascend higher and higher till you reach the dreary pass of the Grimsel; or, turning to the west along the lake of Thun, you pass through the quiet and pleasant Kandergrund, by Kandersteg, and so up to the Gemmi, whence you make a precipitous descent to Leuk, and proceed along the broad valley of the Rhône past Brieg to the Rhône glacier.

Uri and Unterwalden are approached from the Bernese Oberland by two bridle-paths and one carriage-road, that over the Brünig the loveliest of all the Alps. Those who have crossed it in the middle of summer and in bright weather will surely never forget the pleasant impression made upon their minds by the various tints of the wood which clothes the mountain right and left, and the villages nestling amid shady orchards by the side of lakes or streams. The Brünig Pass leads the traveller by the easiest possible route from Interlaken or Meiringen into the lovely district about the Lake of Lucerne, or *vice versé*. The bridle-paths before mentioned are those across the Engstlenjoch, the pass of the Susten, and that of the Surenen, which are covered with snow all the year round.

Proceeding from west to east, the grand St. Gotthard road leads across another pass which is only second in importance to the Simplon. The broad mass of the St. Gotthard is set in the very

midst of the other great mountains, as if it were the heart and core of the Alps—a sort of mysterious sanctuary, the foundation and corner-stone originally laid by the hands of Titans. Towards this point, as if it were some magnetic centre, the numerous ray-like chains of mountains converge from all sides like gathering crystals. Instead, however, of being absorbed into the mass, they stand round it in a circle, like so many lofty buttresses placed there for the support of the sanctuary, or giant halberdiers keeping guard around the great monarch of the Alps. They are knit firmly together by fields of snow and ice, and they maintain a watch over the thirty lakes, larger and smaller, which are set within their sovereign's dominions. They also watch the interests of the four rivers, and give them egress towards the four points of the compass by four several portals, through which they rush forth into the world. The carriage-road passes through the gateway in the northern battlements, and crosses the St. Gotthard district in a southerly direction. It follows the course of the mountain-streams, and connects the whole of Urschweiz* with the Italian lake-district, thus enabling the Germans and Italians to communicate with one another by the most direct and easy line.

The name of the St. Gotthard Pass does not occur till the year A.D. 1162, and both the man who first trod it as well as the man who constructed the first narrow road with its wooden footways and small bridges are lost in the mist and darkness of ages; but from the fourteenth century onwards it is certain that the pass was frequented by the packman

* Uri, Schweiz, and Unterwalden formed the first Swiss Confederation.



ON THE WAY TO THE GRIMSEL.

and his horse, and that the intercourse between Italy and the young Confederacy became more and more lively.

It took usually from five to six days to get from the Swiss lake to Lago Maggiore; but in bad weather, or at an unfavourable time of year, these days were multiplied indefinitely. This state of things, of course, could not meet the requirements of modern times and constantly increasing traffic, and accordingly the cantons of Uri and Tessin, having the wit to see what was to their own interest, joined hands towards the

year 1820. After nearly ten years of gigantic labour, they constructed a broad and beautiful road; and carriages may now accomplish the distance between Urschweiz and North Italy in from sixteen to eighteen hours. Travellers pass along this road in numbers every season; and in 1874 65,000 visitors chose this route, whereas only 28,000 went by way of the Simplon and Splügen.

In these days of hurry and bustle, however, sixteen or eighteen hours are far too much for travellers and merchandise to

spend upon the passage; and besides this, the road is damaged and blocked every autumn by snowstorms, avalanches, and landslips. This will have to be obviated, and the peaceful intercourse of the different nations will have to be carried on under the auspices of the locomotive engine, which will carry them along the smoothest of roads, unhindered by the snow, ice, and fog which sit enthroned on yonder heights. Accordingly the ancient spirit of the mountain, as he sits listening in the depths below, may now hear the human moles at work in his subterranean dominions, cutting, boring, blasting, and burrowing, in order to construct a tunnel ten miles in length, through which, by means of the steam-engine, people and goods may be despatched in a few short hours from the north to the brighter south, without being exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

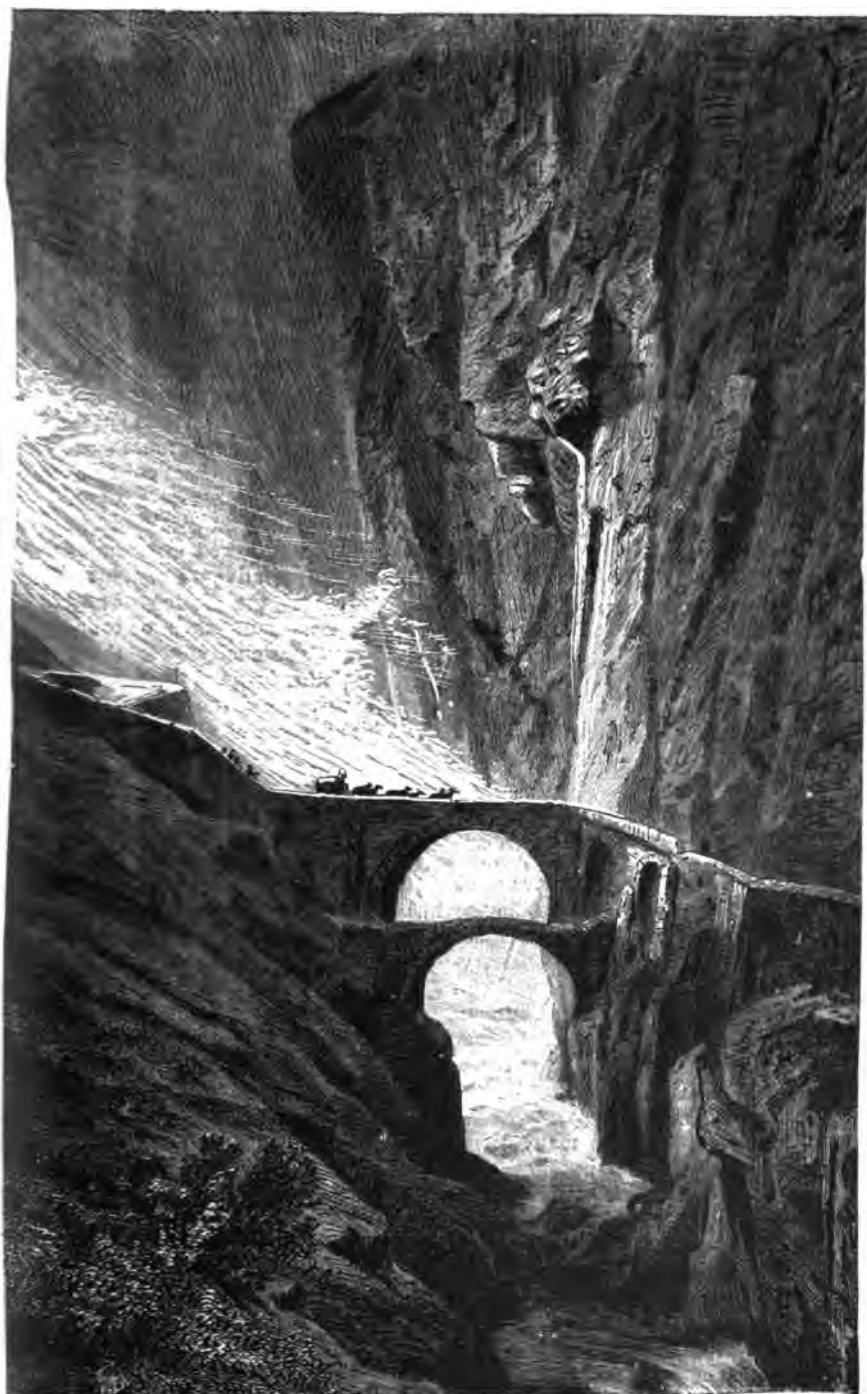
The wagoner has already a foreboding of his fate, as he slowly mounts the innumerable zig-zags of the beautiful road in his heavy creaking wagon drawn by six or eight panting horses; the post-boy, too, knows what awaits him, though the hard bare walls of rock still reëcho merrily with the sound of his whip. A few years more and they will cross the mountain no longer. When the last blow has been struck in the tunnel, the far-famed road will become a legend. Devil's bridges more daring than that across the wild Reuss, which is the only one famous at the present date, will swing from cliff to cliff; the old galleries, buttresses, and bridges will fall to pieces; snow, mountain-torrents, avalanches, and all the wild demon-race of the High Alps will strive to efface the line once scratched by human hands on the face of the hard rock. None

but the poor and insignificant will continue to make use of it, though they, no doubt, will ride and drive across the mountain as long as it is possible to do so.

The Gotthard group occupies a sort of middle position between the Alps of the west and the east. In the west all the transitions in the landscape are sharp and abrupt, and the deep hollow of the valley is closely succeeded by the precipitous height of the mountain without any intermediate gradations. In the Rhetian Alps, on the other hand, there has been a general upheaving of the ground, and you pass by gradual stages from lowland to highland. In the west, the roads which lead up from the valleys to the mountain-passes are steep and difficult; but in the east, the valleys themselves are high up among the Alps, and a gradual, often easy, ascent leads the traveller from what are lowlands in appearance only to the higher region above, whence the descent on the other side is just as easy.

As the valleys are more numerous and more developed among the Rhetian Alps, that is, in the east, than elsewhere, so too there are more passes across the mountains here than in the west. There are roads and bridle-paths leading in all directions, from the wildly romantic valley of the Rhine to the neighbouring canton of Tessin, which is so blooming and fruitful, to the more rugged Engadine, and into Italy itself. Some of these were formerly the most important of all the Alpine passes, and came into use long before the Gotthard road or the roads across the Western Alps.

The venerable pass across the ancient Mons Avium is well known to us by its name of Bernardino; the old narrow road was made by Roman cohorts, the modern one



DEVIL'S BRIDGE, ON THE ST. GOTTHARD ROAD.

was constructed shortly before that of the St. Gotthard. Then there is the equally venerable road across the Splügen. Both run from Chur (Coire) into the gloomily beautiful defile of the Via Mala, and divide to right and left as soon as they reach the little village of Splügen.

The one which strikes off to the left is the splendid Splügen road, which, after ascending uninterruptedly to the summit of the pass, leads us abruptly down from the bleak bare mountains to lovely Chiavenna, with its luxuriant groves, and to Colico on the margin of Lake Como. The sister road winds to the right, across the Bernardino, and terminates south of Lago Maggiore.

The Septimer Pass, too, was formerly of the utmost importance, being the ancestor of all the roads among the Rhetian Alps, and owing its origin to the Romans; so, too, was the mysterious Julier

Pass, which at different periods of its history has seen both the Roman toga, the habit of the Crusader, and the purple mantle of the German emperor; neither must the Albula and Flüela Passes be forgotten. Their first and immediate use is to connect one valley with another; but some of the roads are carried far on into the lovely south.

As fresher and shorter roads are discovered, the old and inconvenient ones are abandoned as a matter of course, at least so far as commerce is concerned; and so it may be that many passes get completely lost in the course of ages. But, besides this, the glaciers have covered or swallowed up some of them, and the advance of the ice has prevented their being of any further use. Huntsmen or tourists may occasionally cross these ruined paths, just for the wonder of the thing; but they are valueless for purposes of general traffic.

CHAPTER III. THE LAKES OF SWITZERLAND: LAKE CONSTANCE.

Two neighbouring powers meet on the shores of Geneva; but the Rhine, as it passes through Lake Constance, forms the boundary-line between the lovely Swiss cantons of St. Gall and Thurgau, and no fewer than four other States—namely, Austria, as represented by Tyrol, Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg.

The old lake has many times changed its name, but never its colour. It sparkled, as now, in all its blue-green splendour when the Romans called it Lake Brigantinus, and their cheerful old town of Brigantia, the modern Bregenz, still lies hidden by the bay at the eastern corner of the lake. They gave the names of Venetus and Acronius to different

parts of it; but in the Middle Ages it was called Lacus Podamicus and Mare Podamus, which the German tongue modified first into Bodam, and then into Bodensee; the 'Swabian Sea' was another of its names; and we of modern times know it as the lovely 'Bodensee.' The ancient lake, lying amid fruit-laden orchards, is like a pleasant illustration of some of Hebel's homely poetry; and is not the honest German tongue to be heard on both sides of it?

We are now standing on the shore of the lake, beneath the fragrant shady trees belonging to the hotel of Friedrichshafen. It is a calm still night, and the moon—'sleeping sunshine,' as

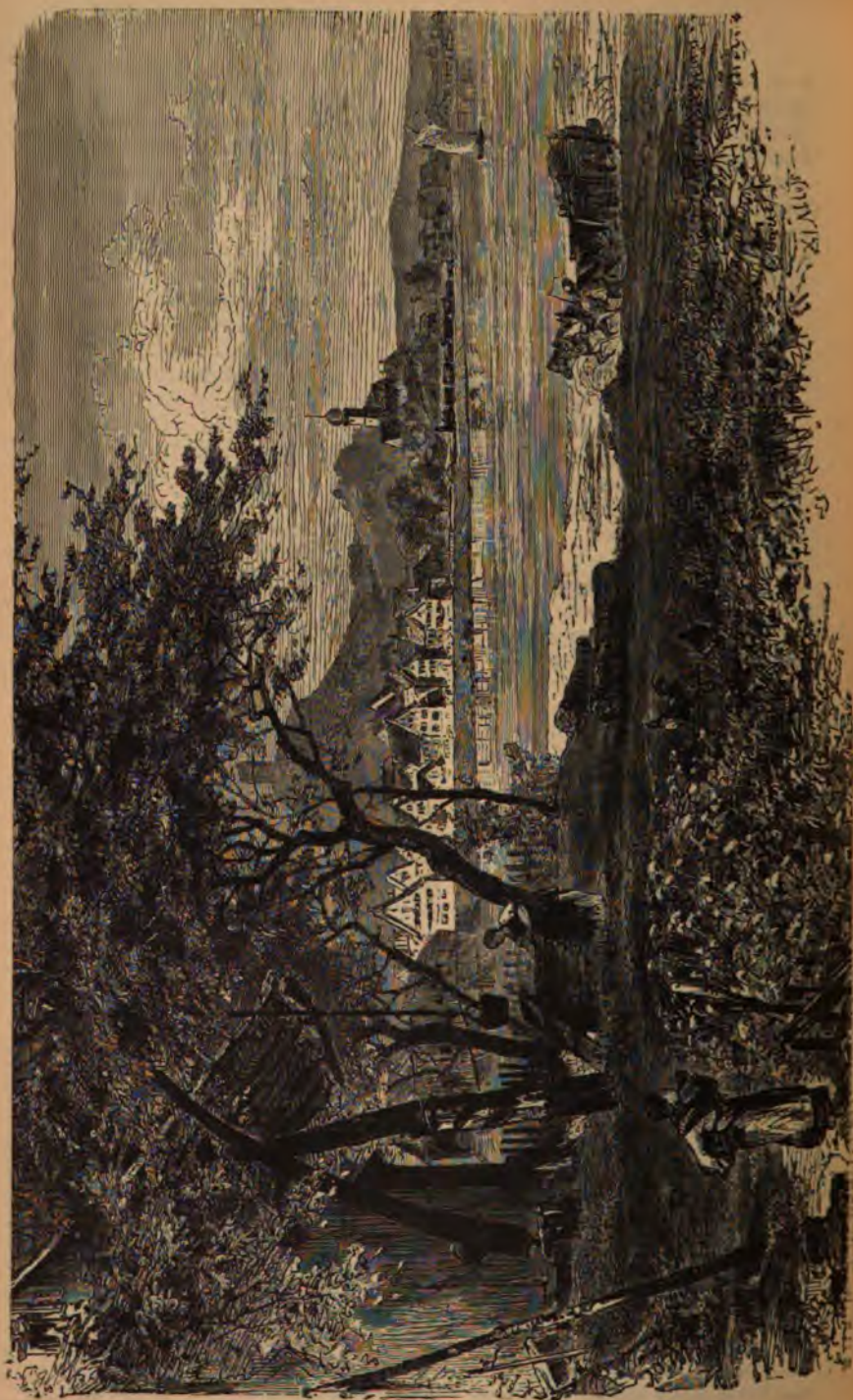
some one has called her—is dreaming upon the waters. The air which blows across the gently heaving surface from the Thurgau shore feels softer and more summer-like, and the dark boats as they rock to and fro on the water look like cradles in a dream. There is what looks like a thin pale mist rising along the opposite horizon; but to-morrow, when we see it in bright daylight, we shall find that it has turned into a chain of mountains which rise gently from the lower level about Zürich in the west, and culminate in the Glärnisch, the glorious Säntis, Altmann, and the heights of Kasten and Kamor. Looking south and east, we see the three sister-peaks of Mittagspitze, Widderstein, and Rhætikon, together with the mighty Scesa Plana of the Grisons, which is the loftiest summit to be seen from the Bodensee. We see too— But for the moment we see only the waves gliding softly and smoothly shorewards, each with a golden coronet on its head. They look as if they flowed from the sleeping moon, which is now emerging from the depths below, and we are reminded of Hebel's children's song:

“What does it do, then, all the night,
It keeps so very still?”
“Why, don't you see it's making
waves?”—

waves and fairy tales!

As we listen to the murmur of the waters, we muse upon the ancient days when the shore was bordered by thick forests, and the lake-dweller raised his habitation upon piles sunk in the water, and the bear and the primeval stag dwelt in the neighbouring thicket. Then followed the time when the Romans invaded the wilderness. Tiberius launched a fleet upon the lake, and forts were built upon the rocks along the shore as a de-

fence against the warlike liberty-loving Alemanni and Rheti. Later still, in the fourth century, the waters of the lake extended to where Rheineck now stands. But a great deal of water has passed through the lake since then, and the Rhine and Bre-genzer Ach have together formed such an extensive deposit of slimy reed-covered soil in the eastern corner, that Rheineck now stands inland an hour's distance from the shore. Christianity came and settled on the Rhine when the Romans were gone; and, strong in their faith, the foreign apostles Gallus and Columban entered the forests cross and axe in hand. St. Gall, the gentle Evangelist of the Alemanni, it was who, like St. Benedict in Italy, had the chief share in causing the light of the Gospel to be shed abroad upon the whole surrounding neighbourhood, where the people had hitherto lived in the darkness of heathenism. The echo of his name still remains, and may be heard in the name of the canton which borders a part of the lake close to Arbon, where the apostle took refuge in his last illness with Willimar, his companion in the faith. One monastery arose after another under the protection of the bold Merovingians and Carolingians. The Merovingians, in deed, were masters of almost the whole of Switzerland, and however much the Alemanni might kick, they could not shake off the Frankish yoke. After a time, castles rose above the monasteries, and the dark old ruined towers, which are still to be seen on the mountain-slopes of Thurgau and St. Gall, seem to speak to us in the language of the Middle Ages. An age of greater enlightenment succeeded; and we see the venerable figure of Barbarossa, the great Hohenstaufen hero, riding



along the lake. Sweet love-songs echo from the castles, and towns and villages spring up beneath the shade of the blossoming fruit-trees. The country around abounds in wealth, and the rich town of Lindau has been called the Swabian Venice.

There is an old story which tells how long ago there lived at Gerlikon, in Thurgau, on the other side of the Thur, a pious herdsman named Heinrich. He walked every day in the gray early dawn to the little church of Gachnang for the early Mass. Heaven favoured him in a very especial manner; for whereas the distance was so great that he could not naturally hear the church-bell at his home in Gerlikon, the sound was nevertheless borne to his ear clear and bright every morning, and then he would take his staff and pouch and go down to Gachnang.

Such is the story; and our longing ears are also preternaturally sharpened, so that they hear, or seem to hear, the enticing call of the Alp-horn. Accordingly we set off in pursuit of the sweet illusion, and bid adieu to the life of captivity we have led in the close town, saying, with the yearning felt by the man who stood on the ramparts of Strasburg,

‘I heard an Alp-horn surely yonder!’

We too cross over to the Swiss shore, and wave our last farewell to Germany.

As we drive along the shore, the Swiss flag floats merrily above our heads; and, from vessels of all sizes, from castles and towers, the white cross on the red ground waves us a hearty welcome. It floats too from the harbour buildings of Rorschach, where our boat lands.

Rorschach is a busy manufacturing town, built out upon the

lake as a sort of outpost of the canton of St. Gall; and, in spite of all the bustle, it makes a wonderfully pleasant and refreshing impression upon us. Properly speaking, the passing traveller sees nothing but a few large buildings, belonging to the harbour and railway station; but he cannot fail to be impressed by the comfort and cheerful prosperity of the place, if, from his boat or the window of his carriage, he gets a glimpse of the bright, often palatial-looking houses, with their gay gardens and orchards and shining windows, and this impression will be confirmed if he walks through the broad streets which will take him to the clean hotel upon the market-place.

‘Rorschach,’ as it was called in the Middle Ages, was then, and has ever since continued to be, the corn-market of Switzerland and the station of her custom-house officers. In this, the granary of Helvetia, the golden corn was stored in gigantic magazines built on the shores of the lake.

The place has become of more importance still in these days, having grown to be the centre of a brisk export trade. There are three lines of railway starting from it: one which passes along the shore by Arbon and Romanshorn to Constance; another which crosses the green pine-covered heights to St. Gall; while a third enters the valley of the Rhine and proceeds as far as Chur, from which place it has every inclination to cross the Splügen. Then, too, there are the ships, many of which daily put into the port, or leave it on their way to Schaffhausen, Constance, Ueberlingen, Meersburg, Lindau, Friedrichshafen, and Bregenz.

The whole neighbourhood of this lake-port is like a lovely garden; and on the Rorschacherberg,

which rises behind the orchards, many an ancient castle is to be seen appearing among the dark woods.

All along the coast, between Romanshorn and the town of Constance in Baden, lie the villages of Utwil, Keswil, Güttingen, Altnau, Münsterlingen, and Botlikofen, like sea-pearls strung upon a green thread, all in the canton of Thurgau and the land of fruit-trees. The church-towers peep out above the trees; and close by every church stands a tap-house, where, on Sundays and holidays, the men and lads stand about in their shirt-sleeves, playing at nine-pins and singing the nonsense-rhymes with which the cider inspires them :

'At Zita I'm a careless youth,
At Zita I am good,
At Zita I have socks and shoes,
At Zita I've no hat !'

Our steamer carries us farther on, however, to Constance, and we smile as the bright old song rises to our lips :

'Constance lies on the Bodensee;
If you don't believe it, go there and see.'

And in very truth there it lies, the grave ancient Constance of history, rising from out the waters as if she were the bride of the lake; and this, perhaps, was the idea in the minds of the French when they named the Bodensee after her. We salute the venerable matron in passing, and make the sign of the cross as we emerge from amid the black shadows cast by those who tortured John Huss and his companions.

Following the course of the Rhine we pass under the bridge and into the Untersee, the second division of the lake. The German shore is on our right, and the Swiss town of Gottlieben on our left. Helvetia and Germania seem for a short time to have changed places, Constance has crossed over

to the Swiss bank on the left, while Schaffhausen, both town and canton, are on the right.

The whole shore of the lake was once occupied by lacustrine habitations built upon piles, and the bed of the Untersee has already yielded some remarkable information; but the peasants of the neighbourhood have more to say about the wonderful events connected with some of the châteaux which lie surrounded by gardens and park-like grounds.

Preëminent among them all is beautiful Arenenberg, where once dwelt a youth who sat and dreamed of an empire, much as Konradin had done before him at Arbon. The star of the imperial house had set, and Hortense, the ex-Queen of Holland, waited here with her son in the hope of its rising again. She did not herself live to see it; but her son, Prince Louis, president of the Thurgau Rifle Club, after a while deserted his safe eyrie 'because his time was come,' and went to Paris, where he hid his melancholy past beneath the folds of the imperial mantle.

Once more the star has set, and once again has an imperial widow waited here with her son and watched impatiently for the dawn. Very different stories these from those of the lake-dwellers!

As our little vessel glides down the lovely Rhine, whether we look to the Swiss or to the Swabian side, our attention is constantly arrested by fresh picturesque views and by the 'castles on the mountains,' of which there is a grand series between Gaienhofen and Oberstaad on the one hand, and Glarisegg and Freudenfels on the other. The excursion down the river and through the Untersee to Stein and thence to Schaffhausen is unquestionably one of the most beautiful which North Switzerland affords. The artist



TOWER IN SCHAFFHAUSEN.

will find an abundant supply of dainty subjects for his pencil, all compressed within a small space, and it is to be regretted that the district should so generally escape the notice of tourists. But little known as it is, and unfamiliar as most of the names are to the ear, every one has at least heard of old 'Stein am Rhein.' A picturesque old nook it is, with much to remind us of the Middle Ages in its solemn ancient houses, with their broad gables, weather-beaten coats-of-arms, snug oriel-windows, and walls covered with faded frescoes and long-forgotten names, and in the groining of the old roof of the court-house, which was once the guildhall, 'Zum Klee.' To complete the picture, the rocky height at the back of the town is crowned by an old ruined castle belonging to the Von Hohenklingen, which looks far and wide over lake, shore, and river, as if it were a mounted sentinel.

It is interesting to observe how the most remote places are affected by the course of the world's history; how the foam from the surge of great public events gets hurled into the most secluded valleys, and flakes of it even touch the recluses who dwell among the mountains. The little town of Stein has had full experience of this. The Thirty Years' War sent one wave over it—for the Swedish General Horn passed through and laid it waste on his way to the siege of Constance; and another similar wave rolled over it at the close of the last century, when the Austrians committed equal havoc, firing, burning, and plundering as they passed by on their way into Switzerland. After this Stein was given to Schaffhausen, having previously belonged to Zürich, with which canton it had had some dispute on the subject of recruiting for foreign armies, which it

had unlawfully sanctioned; and, in fact, with Stein we have reached the canton of Schaffhausen, which lies almost entirely on the right bank of the Rhine. Its friendly neighbour, Baden, encircles it on three sides, and Thurgau and Zürich join it on the south. Switzerland does not always look like Switzerland, at least not like what the generality of tourists imagine it to be, and there is little that is Swiss about the scenery of Schaffhausen. There are no striking or romantic features in the landscape throughout the whole of the canton, which presents a very matter-of-fact aspect to the eye. The population, however, are extremely active and industrious, and quite independent of all foreign assistance, for the products of their own soil are amply sufficient for all their bodily wants. The arms of Schaffhausen are a black ram on a field of gold, and aptly symbolise both its strength and wealth. The Reformation found a ready entrance here, and the flag of liberty waved from every tower.

Formerly there was nothing to be heard in this canton but the lowing and bleating of cattle and sheep, the ring of scythe and sickle, and the pressing of the wine in autumn; no banners were to be seen but those flung out by the blossoming fruit-trees. But now the sober smoky flag of industry floats over the roofs of factories, where steam and water are hard at work driving wheels; the rattle of engines is everywhere to be heard; and, within the last quarter of a century, Schaffhausen has begun to be a busy flourishing town. Besides this, the famous juice of the grape, which has such a good name throughout Switzerland, still flows as of old; and those who have tasted it at the fountain-head will say that



A STREET IN SCHAFFHAUSEN.

'Schaffhuser,' Thaynger, and Hallauer are very fine fellows. 'Don't forget the Kirschwasser,' add those who understand more potent beverages.

There is something indescribable about the good town of Schaffhausen; it is like some grave, able, yet jovial man, who prides himself in a dignified sort of way on his family-tree, and on the punctual discharge of his duty as a citizen. With all this there is moreover a certain mediæval rudeness and roughness about it; and any one who looks up from the steamer at the pyramid of gray walls, roofs, and pointed gables which culminate in the old tower, or wanders through the lonely streets and alleys in the dim twilight, gazing at the projecting oriels, will be inclined to think he has stepped backwards a few centuries into the Middle Ages. Wandering over the uneven pavement of the old imperial city, he will muse in a dreamy sort of way on the

Sober men, black-cloaked, white-ruffed,
wearing chains of honour,
With long swords girt at their sides, and
visages long in proportion;
Maidens in rustling silk, slim figures,
their blossom-like faces
Set in a modest frame of small black cap
and gold tresses,
Which escape from beneath—cathedral-
wards they are tripping,
Urged thereto by the bells and swelling
tones of the organ.'

There are two old churches belonging to the twelfth century in Schaffhausen—namely, the venerable old Minster and the Church of St. John, which have for centuries past been the burying-places of the patrician families of the town. Many of them, such as the Stockars, Mandachs, Meyenburgs, Imthurns, Peyers, &c., are still flourishing, and their arms are to be seen on many an ancient house, while their family history is bound up with that of Schaffhausen, and

is contained in its interesting chronicles.

Schiffhausen (Skiff-houses), or Scaphusæ, as it was formerly called, was founded by boatmen; but its importance was greatly increased by the monks of All Saints, a monastery built by the pious Count Eberhart von Nellenburg in 1052. Towards the end of the thirteenth century it fought for and obtained the rank of a free imperial city. Then the Hapsburgs tossed it about among them; and then—ay, who can tell all the many feuds which followed? The watchmen never left the ramparts, and the warders in the gloomily defiant stronghold of Unoth had something fresh to report every day.

But the city survived it all; and not only survived, but rose to greater and greater eminence, and her honest sons have always shown themselves most devoted and disinterested in their endeavour to do her honour.

The noblest of her sons was Johannes von Müller; but the most original was the famous preacher Geiler von Kaisersberg, who was born here in 1445. Johannes von Müller attended the Gymnasium in 1760, when he was a boy of seven years old, and passed thence to the Collegium Humanitatis. He bequeathed his fame to his native city; and to his native land he gave his splendid *History of Switzerland*. He may indeed be called the father of Swiss history. Müller's writings seem to reflect some of the peculiarities of Schaffhausen itself, and throughout he has remained faithful to the dialect of his native place.

But all the summer travellers who come to Schaffhausen nowadays want to see the waterfall, the largest, if not the highest, in Europe. They will look for

it in vain at Schaffhausen, however.

The Rhine begins to be troubled as soon as it has passed the town; it seems to have some foreboding of its fate, and to shudder as it rushes over its uneven bed between the steep rocks. But for all that you must go as far as Neuhausen, about three miles farther down, before you come to the falls. Those who wish to enjoy the sight under the most comfortable circumstances possible may find quarters in the elegant Schweizerhof Hotel, opposite the Castle of Laufen. This may be called having a place in the front row of the great theatre; and none but grandees can afford to taste the pleasures of Nature with the accompaniment of morning and afternoon coffee on the shady terrace of the hotel. Here, on making special request, nervous people may also be supplied with whey to fortify them for the presence of the great giant who agitates the air like a huge fan. 'Ah's!' and 'O's!' are to be heard on all sides and in all languages.

But before we go, we must cross over to the lovely little Castle of

Laufen, which is situated upon a pleasant shrub-covered height, and looks like a haven of refuge raised on high beyond the reach of the powers of desolation and destruction. Below the castle there are two places, whence, for a trifling payment, you may see the lion rage; and though separated from him by bars, you may be so close to him as to be wetted by the spray. And then—'O, have you seen the falls through coloured glass? No? O, then you must! it is perfectly lovely!'

Yes, indeed, it must be beautiful! But, may I ask, have you ever dived into its mysteries by the light of a full moon? But stay, we will not begin to dream, for we have had a much more practical example set us by the honest man who wrote the following classical verse in the Album of the Falls of the Rhine:

'As I stood just now by the Falls of the Rhine
I was suddenly seized with a fancy divine;
I thought to myself, "If these Falls of the Rhine,
Instead of water, were all of wine,
I should certainly choose them for Falls of mine!"'

(To be continued.)

ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

RAT-TAT, rat-rat—

Up the long, long street

Pat-a-pat, pat-a-pat—

O, the lagging feet !

Rat-tat, rat-tat—

He is over the way ;

'Twill be our turn next,

And 'tis Valentine's-day !

Rat-tat, rat-tat—

O, the quick, quick feet !

He is here at last,

At the end of the street.

With a rush and a whirl,

Fly, fly, little fleet ;

For the first to have

Is the first to greet.

Rat-tat, rat-tat—

Here they are ! here they are !

From lovers and friends,

From near and far.

For each and for all

A word or a line,

For the sake of our sweet

St. Valentine !

Laugh on, little lips ;

Smile still, little eyes ;

For you are no shadows

Of tears or of sighs.

Bloom, bloom, little cheeks,

With your childhood's flush,

That knows not the pain

Of a brighter blush.

Rat-tat, rat-tat—

Let him go his way,

For many a mile

Must he tread to-day ;

While pulses quicken,

And bright eyes gleam,

And young hearts beat

To their first love-dream.

* * * *

Then gather your spoils

In your glad young hands ;

He smiles to see you,

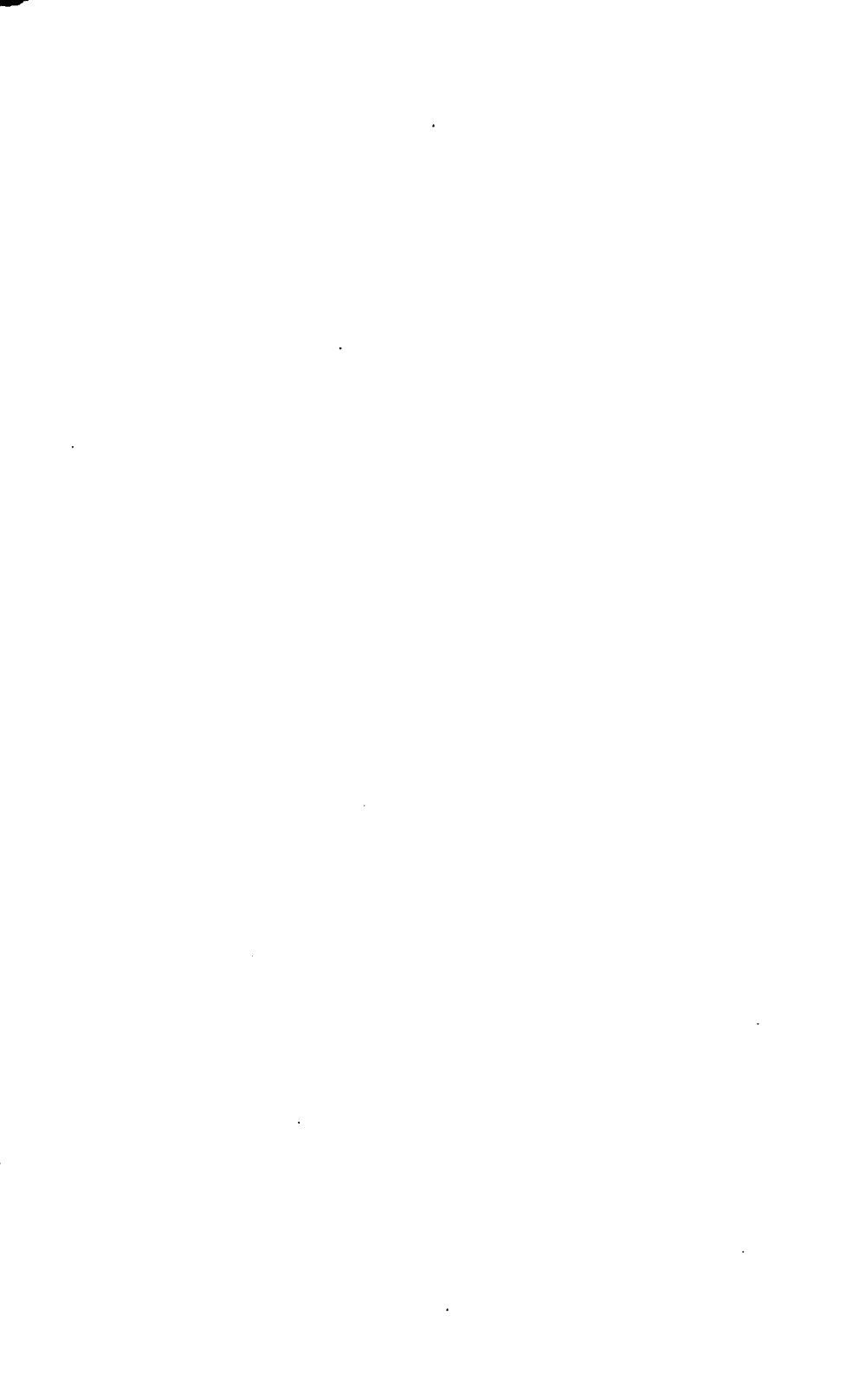
Where'er he stands.

For smiles are guerdon

That seem divine,

When childhood meets

St. Valentine !



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FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME
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A REGIMENTAL VALENTINE ;

Or how Patrick O'Shaughnassy was helped into Matrimony.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A REGIMENTAL MARTYR.'

CHAPTER I.

'RUN?' said Patrick O'Shaughnassy, in answer to a question put to him, as he slipped into his chair at the early mess-dinner, just as the soup was being served ; 'run? B-y Jove, I should think I did run, as hard as ever I could lay legs to ground !'

'What made you so late, Pat?' inquired George de Lyle, the 'senior sub,' next to whom he sat.

'Up at the Colonel's. Mrs. Lifford had a lot of girls in to tea, and I couldn't get away,' he answered. 'Just had seven minutes to get here and dress in.'

'Sharp thing, that. Why didn't you wait for the late dinner?'

'Concert down town; can't get off going.'

'Did you try?' said Mr. de Lyle slyly.

'Well, no,' said the other honestly, 'I didn't.'

Mr. de Lyle laughed, and when after a very hurried meal Mr. O'Shaughnassy rose from the table, remarked to his neighbour on his other hand that 'it really was an awful pity, but Pat, poor devil, was going the way of all the others.'

'What way's that?' said the man in question, who, being brother to one of the officers, and only a visitor in barracks, did not understand the allusion. 'I don't see anything amiss with him.'

'I'll tell you,' answered De Lyle. 'You must know that the Colonel is guardian to a niece, who is immensely rich and very pretty, but the most terrible flirt in creation. Well, whenever a young fellow joins, it is part of the programme that he shall go through a course of instruction at Miss Lifford's hands. They all do, just as children have the measles and the whooping-cough.'

'And how old is Miss Lifford?'

'O, perhaps two-and-twenty; and really the very nicest girl you ever met. She takes them all in hand, and, somehow, contrives to keep good friends with them, even after they've got their dismissal. Now the joke is, that Pat O'Shaughnassy has known her ever since she left school; and as he stands second on the list of subs., he might reasonably be expected to know better. Within the last few weeks he has literally lived to the tune of Alys Lifford. The days he is on duty he is an absolute nuisance to every one; indeed, I am obliged to lock my door against him. And yet, do you know, I'm sorry for him, for he's a down-right good sort of chap.'

An hour later the regular mess-dinner was in full swing, when suddenly Captain Gurney asked 'what had got Pat O'Shaughnassy?'

'The old game,' answered a voice from the other end of the table.

* See *London Society* for August 1877.

'Silly fool!' remarked the senior captain, with great contempt.

'He's not been polished off quite so soon as they usually are,' observed Jack Hilton. 'I should have thought Miss Lifford would have got sick of him by this time.'

'Don't know,' laughed another. 'Pat's very amusing sometimes. I heard a lady ask him, at St. Hilary's wedding, whether his name was pronounced O'Shanassy or O'Shancknassy, as she knew both families. Pat told her, with the most barefaced coolness, that he wasn't an Irishman at all; he came from Kent.'

'Awfully good!' cried a chorus of laughing voices.

'Ah, but he said a neater thing than that,' put in Jack Hilton. 'One day last week Miss Lifford asked us to go in to tea on Sunday afternoon; and Pat said gravely, "I think I will be on duty, but I'll come if I can; and if I don't come, you won't expect me."'

This raised another laugh. Most of my readers are probably aware that it does not take much to provoke mirth and hilarity at a military dinner-table.

'Stop a bit, stop a bit,' cried Jack; 'you haven't heard the cream of the joke yet. On Sunday, you know, young Drew was on duty; so Pat and I went up to the chief's together.'

"So you managed to get off," said Alys, as we went in.

"Well, no, I didn't," answered Pat.

"Then how is it you're not in barracks?" she asked, evidently thinking he had been fool enough to sneak out unawares.

"Because I told Micky Drew's man to call him early this morning; and, faith, the poor chap got up in all the cold and did my work, without being any the wiser."

'And the beauty of the joke

is,' continued Hilton, 'that Pat, in his innocence, really thinks he has stolen a march upon Drew, and hasn't a ghost of an idea that his name was changed for Drew's in the order-book late on Saturday night.'

'How was it his man did not tell him?' said some one.

'Because, to make all complete, Pat told him that Mr. Drew was going to take his duty to-morrow; and, of course, the man having seen the order-book, thought nothing about it. It was pure good luck his pitching upon Drew, though.'

'By George!' exclaimed Captain Gurney, 'this is the 12th, surely. We must send Pat a valentine!'

'So we must!' cried the others.

'I wonder if Miss Lifford will send him one?' said Fred Gordon.

'Not she. Suppose we send him one from her.'

'So we will. What shall it be? Hollo, Gurney! what have you got in your head now?'

For the senior captain was leaning with both elbows on the table, his face buried in his hands. Presently he raised it.

'Wait a minute, you fellows,' he said slowly. 'Pat's on duty to-morrow, isn't he?'

'Yes.'

'Then we'll write a proposal from him to Miss Lifford, and send the note by an orderly; her answer, which is safe to be a refusal, will be a grand surprise for him on St. Valentine's-day.'

This daring proposition was received in silence; the officers of the 52d Dragoons looked from one to another in speechless amazement, mingled with admiration for the master-mind which had conceived this brilliant plot.

At length Fred Gordon relieved his feelings by a prolonged 'B—y Jove!' and then the

whole assembly broke out into a torrent of eager questions.

'Will it be safe?'

'You'll tell us exactly what to say to Pat?'

'You'll write as if from him?'

'I suppose she's quite sure to refuse him?' said Jack Hilton doubtfully.

'Safe to,' replied Captain Gurney confidently; 'it will be the best joke we've had since St. Hilary got spliced.'

'Who will write it?' said George Wintringham; 'because it must be done carefully, and made spoony enough.'

'I'll write the rough copy,' replied Captain Gurney, 'and then we must get hold of some of Pat's writing, to imitate.'

'You need not do that,' announced Fred Gordon; 'Billy Childers writes exactly the same fist as Pat.'

'Are you sure?'

'Perfectly certain; I don't think even Pat himself could tell the difference; and Miss Lifford will not be so familiar with his hand as all that.'

By the united efforts of the officers the following letter was produced:

'Cavalry Barracks, Milchester,
February 18th.'

'My dear Miss Lifford,—I have been trying for some time to speak to you on a subject which lies very near my heart; but, somehow, I have never had an opportunity. I'm not much of a hand at letter-writing, but I think you must know what I mean. Will you marry me, darling? That I love you with all my heart and soul you must have known for some time, and, faith! I can't help thinking you do care a little for me.

'I am fast all day in this dreary barrack-square, so won't you send me one little word to say you will

be my valentine to-morrow? and make the very happiest man in the world into

'PATRICK O'SHAUGHNASSY.'

Captain Gurney read this brilliant production aloud.

'There!' he exclaimed, in a self-satisfied tone, 'I think that reads like Pat, particularly the wind up. Can any of you suggest an improvement?'

There was a general reply in the negative; they all considered it beyond improving.

'One of you run up to Pat's room and get some of his own paper; it will be in the blotting-book on the writing-table; don't bring that with the regimental crest on; bring his own.'

Fred Gordon said he would go. He very soon returned with the spoils, and the letter was copied and ready for sending in no time.

CHAPTER II.

THE following day Captain Gurney sent an orderly to Colonel Lifford's house with the letter, and after some little time the man returned, with a note directed in Alys Lifford's bold handwriting to P. O'Shaughnassy, Esq. According to orders, he took it to Captain Gurney's rooms, where several of the conspirators were waiting to receive it. Their senior, however, locked it up, out of harm's way, saying,

'I suppose a lot of young fools like you would be tearing it open, because your curiosity could not wait till another day; but I'll have none of that nonsense. No; here it stays until I post it, and you'll see it opened with the others to-morrow at luncheon.'

'Are you going to post it?' said Billy Childers, in amazement.

'Why, of course, you young duffer; you don't suppose I'm going to give it to Pat, do you? Lord bless the child, he's as innocent as a serpent! If it were not posted Pat would smell a rat directly, and never believe it came from Miss Lifford at all.'

The answer was accordingly posted; and on the following day, as usual on the feast of St. Valentine, all the letters were saved until luncheon, at which meal the officers were assembled to enjoy the fun.

'Here's one for you, Chim,' said Patrick O'Shaughnassy, taking a packet from the heap; 'come, open it out, man, and let us see.'

The packet contained a lady's long fur ruff, and a very official-looking note, purporting to have come from the commanding officer of the 90th Hussars (for Mr. Drew had only a few months before exchanged into the 52d from that regiment), to the effect that the caudal appendage had been found in Sub-Lieutenant Drew's quarters, and was therefore forwarded, with a request that any other such property which Mr. Drew might have left behind should be at once removed, otherwise his late quarters in — Barracks would be seriously incommoded.

Mr. Drew might certainly have passed for the missing link we hear so much about, and his regimental cognomen of Chimpanzee, more often shortened into Chim, suited his personal appearance to a nicety. As usual, he had to laugh off his chagrin with the best grace he could muster, when, happily for him, the general attention was diverted from him, as Patrick O'Shaughnassy carelessly picked up, from the heap on the table the delicately perfumed crested note, which was to convey such startling news to him.

He did not dream that it came from Miss Lifford, and turned it over with infinite contempt.

'Ugh!' said he, 'an afternoon tea, I suppose, my dear *Captain* O'Shaughnassy. Ah, I know their little ways.'

'For the love of heaven, don't sit drivelling there, man!' cried an impatient voice.

'O, it isn't a valentine,' remarked another, in a disappointed tone, as Mr. O'Shaughnassy took out a note and began reading it.

'Go on with the others,' said Gurney, in order to avert suspicion; a command which no one obeyed, all being too busy watching Pat, amid a silence which became quite oppressive.

'What the d—' began he, then checked himself, and turning the paper over, read it again; changing colour the while from scarlet to white, then from white to scarlet, as though he could not make up his mind which was most becoming to his complexion, finally compromising the matter by remaining the colour of a mangelwurzel. He picked up the envelope and examined it; then he took up the letter again carefully.

'Well,' he said at last, surveying the eager faces crowding round him, 'you chaps have got yourselves into a fine shindy this time, and no mistake about it.'

'What is it? what does she say?' they cried, as with one voice.

'Upon my—' he began.

'Here, give it to me,' said Gurney, who began to suspect Pat was right, and they had got into a 'shindy,' as he said—'give it to me;' at the same time snatching it out of his hands, and reading it quickly.

It was not a very long epistle, but its contents elicited an oath, not loud, but deep, from between the reader's closed teeth.

'I told you so,' said Pat reassuringly.

'What is it?' cried the others. 'She has not, surely, accepted you?'

Mr. O'Shaughnassy nodded.

'O, well, it's all right, then,' said Gordon, in a relieved tone. 'Pat's got all he wants, and she need never know anything at all about it: a very good thing for Pat, I say.'

'Perhaps Pat says the contrary,' interposed that young gentleman. 'I've not asked Miss Lifford to marry, and, what is more, I am not going to do so. I don't intend to marry a woman simply to get you fellows out of a scrape. No, no; Pat O'Shaughnassy may be a thundering fool, but he's not quite such an idiot as to do that.'

'Why, Pat,' exclaimed Jack Hilton, 'we all thought you were "dead nuts" on Miss Lifford.'

'Did you, really? Well, all I have to say is, that you've got yourselves into a pretty shindy this time, and won't there be old Harry to pay when the chief comes home! By Jove! I wouldn't stand in your shoes for a good sum. Perhaps, after this, you will be leaving your neighbour's private affairs alone.'

'Dash it all!' snapped Gurney, 'why can't you marry Miss Lifford, and have done with it? You've been dangling after her, morning, noon, and night, for weeks.'

'To tell you the honest truth, my dear fellows,' said Mr. O'Shaughnassy, with slow deliberation of utterance, 'to tell you the honest truth—I am already engaged to be married!'

CHAPTER III.

If the hero of this little history had suddenly emptied a pail of iced water over the group of officers assembled in the mess-room of the Milchester Barracks, a more perceptible shiver could not have run through them. Not a word was spoken. The brave men who would have cheered their troops on against an enemy, or faced grim death without a sign of flinching, looked in one another's faces blankly, each asking a tacit question—'What are we to do?' receiving for answer—'I'm dashed if I know.'

In their midst stood Patrick O'Shaughnassy, taller, by some inches, than any of them; his arms carelessly crossed upon his broad chest; his good-humoured face wearing a pleasant smile, and his gray eyes—real Irish eyes they were—shining with mirth. At last the smile deepened into a laugh, which displayed strong white filbert-shaped teeth.

'Well, as I said before, gentlemen, you've got yourselves into a pretty shindy.'

'No one can compliment you on the pleasing variety of your remarks,' sneered Captain Gurney; 'that's the fourth time you've made that brilliant observation.'

'So it is. Well, Gurney, you've a very good opportunity of showing your wonderful cleverness,' said Pat, who could afford to be civil, 'and letting the world see if you are as clever at getting out of scrapes yourself as you are of getting other fellows in. When you've got the thing settled, I'll change the "into" into "out," and say it as many times again. I'm going now. I shouldn't like my presence to be any hindrance to general conversation. Good-bye.'

With a laugh, Mr. O'Shaughnassy went noisily out of the

room, and ran quickly up the echoing corridor to his own domain. Safely there, he immediately locked the door, and flinging himself on his bed, indulged in the luxury of a hearty laugh, rolling over and over—burying his face in the pillows to smother the sound of his hilarity. At last he calmed down a little, and, smoothing out Miss Lifford's letter, which he had recaptured from Captain Gurney, read it again with care. I mentioned before that it was not lengthy; indeed, it ran thus:

'You have made me very happy—very happy indeed. Of course I will be your valentine to-morrow. Whose should I be, if not yours?—Always your own
'ALYS.'

Mr. Patrick O'Shaughnessy kissed the crumpled paper rapturously.

'My darling, my sweet Alys!' he murmured blissfully. Then his more natural mode of expressing his satisfaction came in the words, 'By Jove, what a lucky chap I am!'

Could Mr. O'Shaughnessy be alluding to the young lady about whom there had been so much discussion below?

His next movement was to change his uniform for plain clothes, and after locking Miss Lifford's note in a secure place, to light a cigar, and proceed to search amongst the chaos on the table for a pair of gloves. Whilst he was thus employed, some one tried to open the door.

'Come in!' roared Pat. 'Come in, you fool, can't you? O, the door's locked, is it? Well, old man,' as Jack Hilton came in, 'what's up now?'

'Pon my word,' began Jack dolefully, 'how the deuce we are to get out of this business I don't

know; I've a good mind to send my papers in at once.'

'About the best thing you can do,' said Pat consolingly, and still continuing his search; 'and as you're going to be married, it won't make much odds to you.'

'By George! but Gurney is in a funk.'

'And so should I be,' said Pat, 'if I were in his shoes—a confounded fool! It's to be hoped this will cure him. Well, now,' having found his gloves, 'I must be off; ta-ta!'

'Stop, stop!' cried Hilton; 'where are you going? To the Colonel's?'

'Now, my good fellow, do you expect me to go and patch up your damages just by being asked?'

'O Lord! I didn't know; you always do go there.'

'If it's any satisfaction to you to know it, I'm going into Milchester.'

'To meet Miss Lifford?' said Hilton eagerly, like a drowning man ready to catch at the weakest straw.

'I am not going to meet Miss Lifford,' said Pat, looking back at the door, and closing it just in time to escape a missile, in the shape of a boot, which Mr. Hilton flung at his head. Ah, it is only in a university or a barrack that one man can go into another man's room and fling his own boots at his head without provoking offence! Truly there is something of Arcadia in both places!

When Patrick O'Shaughnessy told Jack Hilton he was going into Milchester, he was speaking sober truth; for into that most dreary of dreary towns he really did go. At the first stand, however, he took a cab, and pulling up the blind windows, ordered the man to drive to Colonel Lifford's. The chief's house was in the centre of a village about a

mile and a half from Milchester, on the road which led past the barracks.

Having satisfied himself by a peep from the little window at the back that none of the officers were in sight, he slipped out, telling the driver to come back in an hour, and answer no questions.

He found Alys Lifford sitting alone in the drawing-room, and, as she sprang up with pretty eagerness to meet him, took her bodily into his arms.

'My darling! My best and dearest!'

For some time their conversation was not rational, nor indeed was it fluent. Then Patrick, feeling that 'life is short and time is fleeting,' set about broaching to Miss Lifford the subject which was just then occupying the attention of the gentlemen in the Milchester Barracks.

'My darling,' he began, with a cough, 'you got a note from me yesterday?'

Miss Lifford raised her head from his shoulder and regarded him with blank amazement.

'Of course I did, and answered it. You didn't write to me again, did you?'

'I didn't write at all,' blurted out Pat.

'Did not write at all? What do you mean? Are you mad, Mr. O'Shaughnessy?'

'Well, it was "them." I knew nothing at all about it till I got your letter this morning.'

'Them?' repeated Alys slowly, unconsciously using Pat's ungrammatical form of speech. 'Did they write the letter I got yesterday?'

'Yes, confound them!'

'And did they see my answer?'

'I could not help it,' said Pat humbly. 'What was one against so many? You won't be angry with me, will you, my darling?'

'Captain Gurney and Mr. Hilton,' said a servant, opening the door.

Alys Lifford came forward as the two men walked into the room.

'I never, in all my life, heard of such an ungentlemanly, disgraceful action, never. I could not have believed it possible. Unmanly, cowardly!' she cried passionately, though the sound of tears was in her voice. 'I do not know which of you is the worst or the most to be blamed; but as surely as I am Alys Lifford, I will never speak to any of you again.'

She vanished into an inner room, and the three men stood as if turned to stone. All the colour faded out of Patrick O'Shaughnessy's ruddy face, leaving it as white as death. He crossed the room to where his superior was standing, and gripped his shoulder with trembling fingers.

'As I live, I'll pay you out for this fine trick,' he said, in a low voice, shaking with suppressed passion. 'You shall live to repent it, confound you!'

Then he stalked out of the room without another word.

'I shall send in my papers at once,' said Jack Hilton, in the tone of a martyr. 'As for you, Gurney, you had better shoot yourself.'

'Umph!' said Captain Gurney doubtfully.

CHAPTER IV.

A WEEK passed away, and still Colonel Lifford did not return from his leave. The officers of the 52d, during that time, went through various stages of misery.

Occasionally they displayed symptoms of swaggering bravado, but they neither deceived themselves nor each other; and the

general tone of society in the mess-room might be fairly described as 'hang-dog.' Colonel Lifford was a martinet of the very fiercest calibre, and the dread with which his return was anticipated was simply pitiable.

The state of Mr. O'Shaughnassy's temper did not add to the general hilarity of the community. As George de Lyle expressed it, 'Pat was for all the world like a bear with a sore head.'

None of them ventured into his room, nor indeed said a word to him on any subject whatever, except one or two who were not involved in the scrape.

Mr. Hilton kept his word and sent in his papers, so consequently felt a little more at his ease than his comrades; and Miss Lifford kept *her* word and 'cut' the whole of them, which was, as Mr. de Lyle told her, an awful shame; on the strength of which she made an exception in his favour, and flirted with him in a disgraceful manner. For poor Patrick O'Shaughnassy she had no mercy. At the cathedral, the rink, the theatre, and at all other places where they met, she did not deign to notice him in the least, though he, poor fellow, as all his comrades knew, tried again and again to soften her wrath.

At the end of a week the news came that Colonel Lifford had fallen in the hunting-field and broken his arm. I'm afraid his officers were not so sorry as they should have been; but the accident meant to them a respite, and when Mrs. and Miss Lifford departed to join the sick man, they fell back into their old ways and breathed freely once more.

Patrick O'Shaughnassy's ill-temper, however, increased visibly, and, after a fortnight not very pleasantly passed, he announced that he had got a month's

leave, and was going to be married.

'Going to be married?' cried the officers in chorus. 'Why, Pat, we all thought—'

'What business had you to think, then?' retorted Pat, it must be owned somewhat uncourteously. 'I can't stand this any longer; so I'm going to get married, and see if that will mend it.'

At the door he fired a parting shot.

'And I hope you'll find it pretty warm when the chief comes back.'

'Selfish brute!' remarked Captain Gurney, when he had gone.

'Poor devil!' commented De Lyle. 'I never thought Pat would have taken it so much to heart. Anyway, I do pity the girl.'

The weeks slipped away and still Colonel Lifford was absent; his broken arm proved very troublesome, and he had received such a severe shaking from his fall that his medical advisers forbade his returning to duty for some time. At length he was able to do so, and the Major announced that he might be expected on the 7th of the month, during the week that the Yeomanry Cavalry were assembled in Milchester for their annual training. This news filled the gallant officers of the 52d anew with dismay and consternation. They were in 'no end of a funk, by Jove.' And when it was reported that he had arrived in the town, and did not make his appearance in the barracks, it was considered a very bad sign, from which they inferred that his wrath was indeed terrible.

Whilst this black state of affairs was being discussed in the ante-room, Patrick O'Shaughnassy walked in, looking as bright and jolly as if he had never had a trouble in his life.

'I hear the chief's back to-day,' he said, with a hearty laugh. 'I suppose you men are all quaking in your shoes!'

No one answered, and there was silence until Mr. Gordon said that they understood he had gone away to be married.

'So I did,' he answered.

'And didn't it come off? We never saw any announcement.'

'Come off? Of course it did. The missis is down at the Royal Swan.'

'Who is she?' asked Billy Childers.

'Who is she? Why, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, of course!'

'Shall we see her at the ball those Yeomanry fellows give to-night?'

'O, yes. Good-bye. Wish you good luck for to-morrow.'

A few hours later the officers of the Dragoons went into the brilliantly lighted ballroom.

'Do you think the O'Shaughnessys have come?' said De Lyle to one of the hosts.

'Yes, half an hour ago at least. What a pretty girl she is! You'll see them somewhere about,' said he, and moved away.

'There's Pat,' said Gurney; 'and, by the Lord Harry, he's dancing with Alys Lifford! What does that mean?'

'She looks happy enough, and better friends than Pat's wife will like if she hears the story.'

'O, she never will hear it. Pat isn't such a fool as to tell her himself. I wonder which is she?'

'There's Pat. I say, Pat, aren't you going to introduce us to your wife?'

'O yes, to be sure. Come along.'

He led them across the room to where a lady, dressed in the richest bridal costume, was talking with other ladies.

'My darling, here are some of

my brother-officers come to make your acquaintance,' he said. 'Captain Gurney and Mr. Gordon—Mrs. O'Shaughnessy.'

To their unspeakable astonishment, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy had the dark eyes, the pure profile, and the smiling mouth of Alys Lifford.

'Why—Miss Lifford!' gasped the senior captain. 'I—I—you—at least—'

'Ah,' she laughed, 'you are thinking of the tragic vow I made the day I found you out. Well, I have kept it. I am not Alys Lifford now, you know.'

'And I think I kept mine,' laughed her husband joyously. 'I think I paid you all out. O, did we not steal a march upon you! I can tell you, though, it was precious hard work keeping up the sulks.'

Although everything came to such a happy and orthodox ending, Colonel Lifford said a few words the next day, which brought the tingling blood into the cheeks and ears of his listeners; and since that time Captain Gurney finds it as well to leave his friends' private affairs in their own hands. He has learnt from experience that there is a Nemesis, which repays even such apparently insignificant unkindnesses as he took so much pleasure in inflicting upon others, for into two of the most pleasant houses amongst the married officers of the 52d he is never asked; and although Gerard St. Hilary and Patrick O'Shaughnessy, having obtained their hearts' desire, would willingly forget and forgive past offences, their wives imperatively decline to give Captain Gurney the chance of making more mischief, on the very sensible ground that 'prevention is better than cure.'

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

SERJEANTS' INN AND SERJEANTS.

THE threatened disappearance of the Serjeants by gradual and painless extinction was indicated by the final closing of Serjeants' Inn on the evening of the 21st of June last year. The close was an *euthanasia*. The learned serjeant, who had purchased the building, celebrated its obsequies by a very cheerful *conversazione*. What will be ultimately done with the building and site, the offer to resell on the part of the owner having fallen to the ground, it is difficult to say, except that the building will ultimately have to come down. The old hall is now closed, and silently waits its destiny. Thus passes away one more relic of old London.

At one time there were three Inns dedicated to the coif; that is to say, to all serjeants and judges who had been obliged to take the coif before they could be judges. But in course of time the so-called Inns in Holborn and Fleet-street became disused by serjeants, and the title could only be properly applied to the building in Chancery-lane, once known as Faryndon Inn. The name is derived from one Robert Faryndon, who has also perpetuated his memory in Farringdon-street and Farringdon-market. The building has a long legal ascertained history. In the time of Richard II. it belonged to the Bishop of Ely, and by him was let to one of the six clerks of Chancery. In the time of Henry IV. we find it with the name of Faryndon Hall,

and also the statement that serjeants-at-law had lodgings there. In the next reign, Henry V., the whole house was demised to 'judges and others learned in the law,' the bishop's rights being reserved. In the following reign, that of the gentle and unfortunate Henry VI., it is called 'Hospitium Justiciariorum.' In that reign it was disused for a whole year through the want of repairs. It is still more exactly defined, in the time of Edward IV., as 'Hospicium vacatum, Serjeants' Inn, Chancellor's-lane.' It subsequently became the property of the serjeants, who, exercising their legal right, have judiciously sold it to a distinguished member of their body, and shared the proceeds. The hall is a striking room. The old *façade* was much admired by Serjeant Cox's guests. Armorial bearings in painted glass decorate the larger and the lesser windows. This hall has been a busy place in its time. The judges used to sit here on appeal as visitors of the Inns of Court. Out of term-time the revenue sittings of the Court of Appeal were held here. During term-time it used to be applied to legitimate dining purposes by judges and serjeants. The old hall, to all intents and purposes, died solemnly to the sound of music, its last moments being beguiled by the strains of a military band stationed there. The room used as a reception-room, and which probably presented a more attractive appearance than ever before in its long history, was

called the 'chapel,' but we believe there is no evidence that it was ever used for any ecclesiastical purpose. It has been chiefly known as the 'sacristy' and 'hospitium.' Indeed, the rumour was that it had hardly ever been used before, but this is not correct. It was formerly the custom that when a barrister had been made a serjeant, and had duly partaken of sack, biscuit, and sweetmeats, he should forthwith proceed to Serjeants' Inn and take up his abode there.

There was no dignity more ancient and dignified than that of serjeant, which Devonian Fortescue, in his work *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, pronounces most worshipful and solemn. Various legal writers have exercised their wits on the meaning and mystery of this high legal degree. The coif and the ring have always delighted the legal imagination. There was a time in which the king's serjeant took precedence even of the king's attorney-general. The king's serjeants were called the 'ancient,' and sometimes the 'ancientest,' serjeants. Their feasts and banquets were renowned beyond other legal feastings. Socially they took precedence of king's counsel. They never received any pay as king's counsel used to do; and if they received a brief in any case where the Crown was concerned, they had never, like king's counsel, to apply for leave. On the contrary, their oath was of an ample and peculiar kind, binding them to the service of the people as much as to that of the king. 'Ye shall swear that well and truly ye shall serve the king's people as one of his serjeants-at-law. And ye shall truly counsel them that ye shall be retained with, after your cunning; and ye shall not defer tract, nor delay their causes wil-

lingly for covetousness of money, or other thing that may turn you to profit; and ye shall give due attendance according. So God you help and His saints.' We commend this oath to the morally-profitable consideration of the gentlemen of the long robe.

Serjeants have very much admired each other and the great institution to which they belong. Certainly they have held their own both at the Bar and in legal literature, and the list at the present day is an illustrious one. About eight years ago the genial and learned Serjeant Woolrych published a work on the *Lives of Eminent Serjeants-at-Law of the English Bar*. When he touches on contemporary biography, as in the case of the well-remembered Serjeant Wilkins, he is racy and graphic. Ordinarily he preserves a stately historic pace as he deals with the great names of Maynard, Plowden, Sir John Davys, Bulstrode Whitelock, Glyn, Prime, Leus, Onslow, Shepherd. Many more might be added; such names would adorn Serjeants' Inn or any other society. Serjeant Woolrych was taken away before what he would have considered an evil day, the gradual extinction of his order and the probable demolition of his house. In the brilliant assemblage of that Thursday evening, to bid the old place adieu, all seemed reconciled to the good reasons given by the poet, why

'The old order changeth, yielding place to new.'

We were a little reminded of Mr. Long's picture at the Royal Academy. The mummy was not absent from the festivities. There was a lesson on the mutability of all things. The old hall, so to speak, passed away in light and music. Then the darkness fell, and we shall know it no more.

HYDRAULIC MACHINERY.

During the last forty years the use of water as an agent for the storage and transmission of power, generated either by the gravitation of the water itself, or in other ways, has been introduced and applied in various shapes and directions, of kinds quite different from the older forms of water-wheel, turbine, &c. A paper on the history of the development of this class of machinery was recently read before the Institute of Civil Engineers, by Sir William Armstrong, to whom a large part of the progress that has been made is due. Noticing the waste of power exhibited in mountainous districts through the non-utilisation of the descending rills, the speaker was led to devise a water-pressure engine combining the use of pistons with the continuous rotation of a water-wheel, which was tried in Newcastle with good results in 1839, being connected with the water-supply of the town. Arguing that it is more economical in many cases to employ water as a motive-power than hand labour (as in cranes and many hand-worked machines), he constructed several forms of hydraulic engines specially adapted to these purposes; one especially intended to lift heavy weights consisted of a piston working downwards in a cylinder, a sheaf of blocks being attached to the end of the piston, and another to the cylinder. As the piston descends the blocks become separated by a reversal of the ordinary mode of using sheaves of pulleys, so that the end of a chain passing over the pulleys in each sheaf alternately is raised from the ground, lifting the cage attached to it as the piston descends, the motion of the piston being multiplied by the blocks (and of course

its effective force correspondingly diminished). The same arrangement was adapted to a crane, the arm (or jib) of which was turned round by a separate hydraulic cylinder, the use of which was also applied to dock-gates, sluices, and the like, in Liverpool, Grimsby, and elsewhere, analogous arrangements being used for capstans, railway turn-tables, traversing platforms, &c., many illustrations of which may be seen at the Paddington terminus of the Great Western Railway.

In order to work machinery of this kind an enormous pressure is requisite; to generate this either the water must be pumped up to a considerable elevation (if not naturally obtained from a considerable height), or a device employed termed an *accumulator*. This is virtually a hydrostatic press with an enormous load on the piston: a small water-supply is continuously pumped into this, thereby gradually raising the piston and load, and forming a reservoir or supply of water under great pressure. When this is required for use in any machine the piston and load descend as the water is withdrawn, thus keeping up the pressure equably until the accumulator is emptied (of course the dimensions of the cylinder of the hydraulic machines to be worked are practically so proportioned to the size of the accumulator and the supply pump that it never actually becomes emptied, but is always more or less full, thus taking the place of an elevated reservoir). Small streams of water descending from a lofty elevation, such as mountain torrents and rills, can be advantageously employed as prime movers; when the inequality of the supply prevents the direct rise of the falling water, the fall can be utilised by making the water pump itself

partially into an accumulator, from which a small pipe will transmit water to a long distance under any required pressure, according to the load on the piston of the accumulator. This plan has been adopted in various places with great success, notably at Allenheads; it is proposed to utilise the force of the first cataracts of the Nile in this way. Probably the problem of the utilisation of tidal power may be solved by machinery of this class. Although at present, and probably for some centuries to come, the coal-supply of the world will meet all demands made upon it, yet there must inevitably come a time when the scarcity of coal, owing to the use of all to be found at moderate depths, will be so inconvenient, and the price of what is to be obtained will be so high, that other forms of motive-power now overlooked and wasted will be eagerly sought after. Even now in many situations water-power could economically be substituted for steam, at present used in deference to the *vis inertiae* of the ordinary engineers and mechanics, who have not altogether freed themselves from the shackles of custom and prejudice.

ARTIFICIAL MADDER COLOURS.

Within the last few years an industry has sprung up of some considerable magnitude, the effect of which is very largely to diminish the cultivation of the madder plant, from which are derived the chief dye-stuffs used for the red, violet, lilac, black, and other shades of colours used in calico printing and dyeing and for other analogous purposes. Before the year 1868 the amount of madder-root imported into this country for the purpose of thence extracting these dyes averaged upwards of 15,000 tons per annum, whilst

2200 tons more of *garancine* (madder prepared in a special way so as to be better suitable for certain of the purposes of the dyer) were also annually imported. The corresponding amounts imported in 1876 only reached about 3700 tons of madder and 800 of *garancine*. This great falling off in the amount of natural madder colour now employed in dyeing is not due to any particular change of fashion causing certain styles of goods to be no longer manufactured and used, nor is it attributable to the employment of other vegetable colours of analogous characters, but more cheaply obtainable. The cause is simply that, owing to recent advances of chemical science, it has become possible to manufacture the same colouring matters as naturally occur in madder, or can be thence derived, from entirely different and much cheaper materials, and consequently that the natural madder has been largely supplanted by these artificial colours and driven out of the markets; and this to so great an extent, that whilst up to 1868 the amount of natural madder grown in all the different places conjointly where this root is cultivated averaged 70,000 tons per annum, the artificial colours now produced represent upwards of 50,000 tons, and are rapidly increasing in amount; so that the cultivation of madder is becoming unremunerative, and will probably soon become a thing of the past, thereby liberating for the growth of cereals and other foods vast quantities of land hitherto employed simply for the production of this colour-plant. From a utilitarian point of view this result, unpleasant as it must clearly be to those whose capital has been invested in madder farms, is an immense benefit to mankind. It being admitted that he is a

benefactor who makes two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before, the *savants* who thus set free thousands and thousands of acres for the supply of food must necessarily be benefactors on a very large scale.

In 1832 some researches made by two well-known French chemists, MM. Dumas and Laurent, upon certain of the constituents of coal-tar, revealed the fact that a substance is thence obtainable consisting of the elements carbon and hydrogen (and thence termed a *hydro-carbon*), and possessed of certain peculiar properties. To this they applied the term *anthracene*, to distinguish it from numerous other hydro-carbons also existing in coal-tar. So far as 'practical' results are concerned, this discovery remained wholly infertile for many years; anthracene, and certain bodies derived from it by oxidation and other chemical processes, remained chemical curiosities, having been seen and handled in a pure state by but few persons. Similarly, when in 1863 the late Dr. Anderson of Glasgow reinvestigated anthracene and its derivatives, and obtained a good deal of additional knowledge on the subject, nothing transpired which in any degree could lead to the idea that this little known and out-of-the-way substance would shortly become the basis of a large industry, involving vast sums of money, and utterly changing the face of the earth in certain districts. In 1868, however, two German *savants*, Graebe and Liebermann, whilst investigating from a scientific point of view the chemical habitudes of the substance termed *alizarin*, one of the principal colouring matters contained in

madder, found that by certain processes it could be converted into anthracene; and, which was of more importance, that it was possible to reverse the operations, and transform anthracene into alizarin. The knowledge of this discovery soon caused a number of trials to be made, for the purpose of extracting anthracene on a commercial scale at a cheap rate from coal-tar, and of converting this anthracene into alizarin by methods sufficiently inexpensive to enable the product to compete in the market with natural madder. Considerable success attended these attempts, and speedily several processes were patented for these purposes. Some of these processes have been found to give products even superior to the natural madder colours, owing to the preponderance in the artificial dye-stuffs of certain constituents either existing only in small quantity in madder, or not present therein at all. And such success has attended the use for calico-printing, &c., of these materials, that, before a decade has elapsed since the germ of the discovery of the first crude process for the artificial production of alizarin was made publicly known to scientific men, the trade in madder has been revolutionised, the growth and cultivation of the natural plant having been reduced to a quarter of its former dimensions, with every prospect of almost entire extinction being speedily brought about; whilst vast sums of money have been transferred from this application to an entirely new branch of manufacture, and large tracts of country entirely changed in character through the alteration of the nature of the staple substances grown thereon.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

ANSWER TO No. II. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

| | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. F | U | R | B | E | L | O | W |
| 2. A | | | | C | | | E |
| 3. R | | I | V | A | | L | |
| 4. E | | N | A | M | E | L | |

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abd-el-Kadir, Abelard, Acephate, Aces, A Cigarette, Acipenser, Adohr, A Guernseyite, Alder, Aleph, Allan Water, Alma, A. M. C. B. O., Antagonist, Araba, Arno, 'Arry Repressed, Ash, Beatrice W., Bellhouse, Blue-Peter, Bob Acres, Bobby, Bogie, Bonbon, Bon Gualtier, Brief, Bumpkin, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Canorts, Carina, Castledine, Cat & Kittens, Cats & Co., Cerberus, Chang's Granddaughter, Chicksands, Chim, Chinese Feet, Christmas Rose, Cid, Clarice, C. O., Cockatoo, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Crumbs, Cunning Grethel, Cwrws, De Bacquencourt, De Knochter, Denmark, Der Hund, Dirk Hatterack, Dixie, Domino, Double Elephant, Dubosc, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, E. M. B., Emeric, En Avant, Eros, Esperance, Esor, Excelsior Jack, Exeunt, Festina lente, Flamen, Florence, Foxhound, Frau Clebsch, General Buncombe, Gimlet-Eye, Gnat, Go-Bang, Gogledd Cymru, Griselda, G. U. E., Guerin, Hag, Half-and-Half, Hampstead, Hampton Courtier, Harrow Road West, Hazlewood, H. B., Heartie, Henricus, Hepton Hill, Highlander, Hibernicus, Holbeach St. Mark, Hopeful, Ignoramus, Incoherent, Jack, Jave & c., Jessica, Jethart, John & Queen Caroline, John o' Gaunt, Kanitboko, K. C. Brighton, Kew, Knaresborough, Laddie, Lady Freddie, Lanreath, L. B., Leeks, L. E. K., Leona, L. H. M., Lila, Littlejohn, Little Mither, Lizzie, L. L., Machaon, Mahrud, Manus O'Toole, Mayfield, Mephistopheles, Mignon, Minola, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo, Namelot, Newell, New Republic, Nil Desperandum, Nip, No Conjuror, Non sine gloria, No. 2, Nunquam non paratus, O'Ban, (Edipus, Old Log, Omicron, Osman, Onsebank, O. V. G., Pat, Patty Probit, Pendragon, Peter, Pip, Pockets, Poor Fan, Pud, Puss, Quill, Racer, Retarof, Remloh, Reynard

Respice finem, Roe, Rosa A., Roundhay, Ruy Blas, Santa Lucia, Senga, Shaitân, Sir Patrick Felia, Smashjavelin, Sootie, Springtime, Squib, Strivlini, Syrinx, Tally-ho, Temple Bar, Tempus Fugit, The Borogones, The Mad Tea-Party, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Three Jumbles, Three Old Girls, Thunder, Tiddy Dingle, Tine, Tiny Tim, Titus A. Drum, Tory, Toto, Truecamdo, Try, Two Peacocks, Ulverston, Vathek, V. Cello, Verulam, Walrus, Walter Sidney, Wee Plots, Welsh Rabbit, William & Harold, Winter Solstice, Whimbrel, White Lancer, Xiphias, XX, Yourstruly, Yule, and one with no signature—215 correct, and 42 incorrect : 257 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

No other words than those which were given by the author can be accepted as correct for the lights of Acrostic No. I.

Two Peacocks.—Space cannot be spared to repeat the acrostic when its answer appears.

Bon Gualtier.—What was written last month is now repeated, that it is believed the 'lights' of the acrostics will be so self-evident when they are discovered, that alternative words will be altogether unnecessary. In the case you mention, 'Reciprocal' will not bear comparison with 'Rival' for the third light. In fact, it is no answer. How could any one be a 'reciprocal'? Solvers should persevere until they alight upon a word which appears unmistakable, rather than trust their answer to two or three words which seem to very nearly fit the description.

Aberdeen.—Credit of course will not be given for a solution unless it is correct in all the lights.

Admiral.—This pseudonym (not Penton) is the one you first sent in.

A. L.—Your letter of Dec. 12th did not come to hand.

The particular attention of a few solvers is called to the time for posting the answers.

No. III.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

We have them yet, and still they serve to tell
Of little raptures which our youth befell.

- i. Old Adam's son at this age had a son.
- ii. Lo the poor Indian with his lay out-spun !
- iii. This light, though not the last, means just the same.
- iv. This is mere mud, yet music from it came.
- v. 'Tis to invest, and this we may with stock.
- vi. We do it to it, bearing every shock.
- vii. A custom Britons aren't accustomed to.
- viii. Brave, and yet sat on oft by not a few.
- ix. Who is it is a fool, who does, a knave.
- x. When this brings heat the cooling shade we crave.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the March Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by Feb. 10th.



She obeyed instinctively, and stood still in a panic. The next moment the speaker emerged from the brushwood.

See p. 311.

LONDON SO

MARCH

SECRET

BY BENJAMIN T. ...

CHAPTER 5

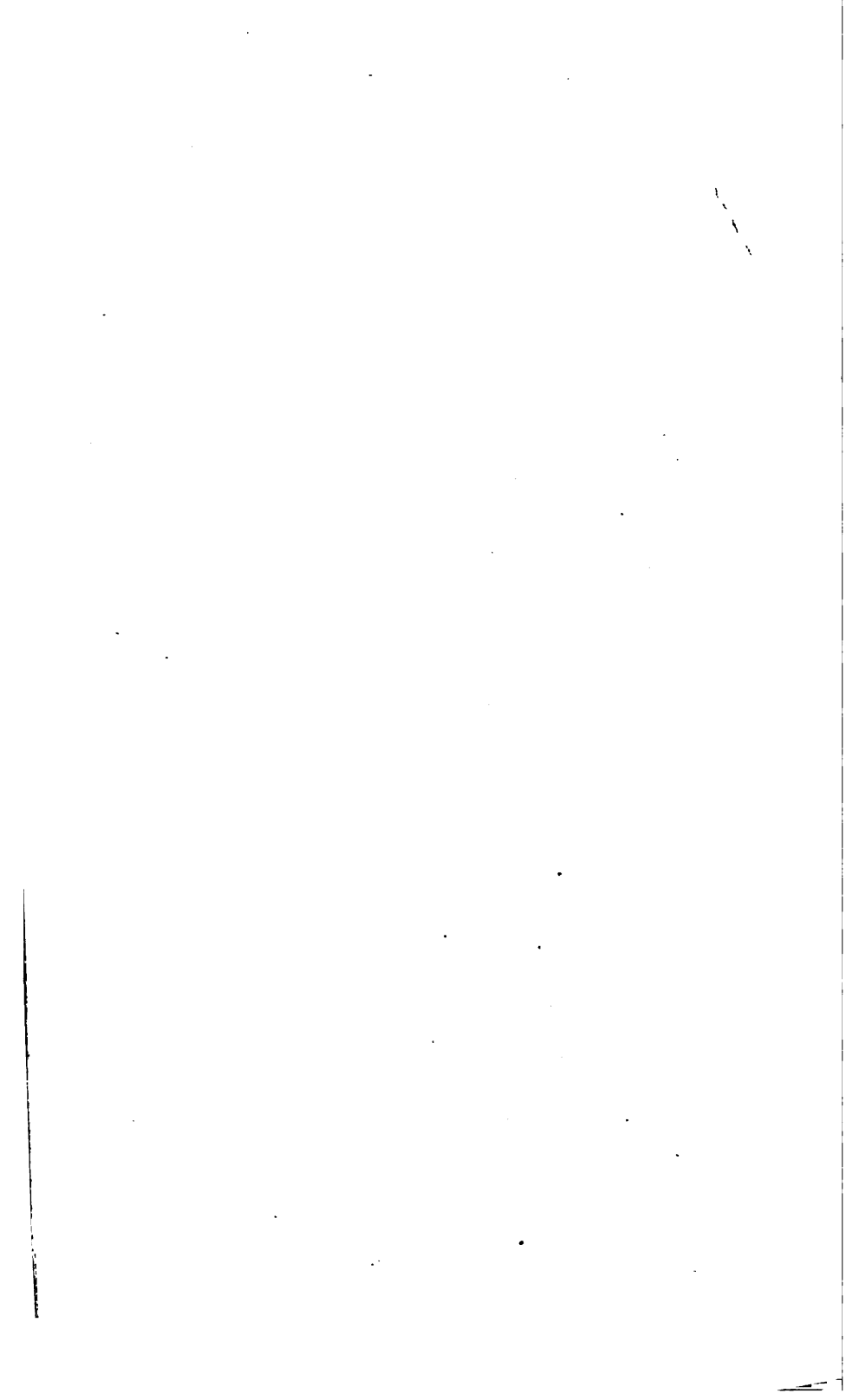
RETRACTED

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It was all due to some thing
misasserting, original, the person

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LONDON SOCIETY.

MARCH 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER VI.

BETROTHED.

A LEADING feature in Harry Kennedy's life had been the strange knack he had always shown for acquiring nicknames. No sooner did he put in his appearance as a small boy at his first school than he had been dubbed 'the great Auk.' In those days he was an ungainly lad, with a figure all hasty development without proportion, a face that required to be accounted for, and painfully conscious of his inability to efface his unique and conspicuous person. Great Auk he remained until his promotion to Eton, where he was re-christened Spillikins. At college he was hardly known, even to the dons, except by the *sobriquet* of Ursa Major, which somebody had flung at him one day, and which stuck like a bur. Finally his co-mates at the iron-works, where he had studied for his profession, had nicknamed him Little John, soon cutting it down into Joe, a familiar appellation his family, his friends had caught up and he seemed likely to retain for life, almost forgetting that he ever had another.

It was all due to something self-asserting, original, idiosyncra-

tical, about the outer man, that *would* stand forth, take out a patent for itself, as it were, and, like a new genus, had a right to a characteristic noun. There were Toms many, Dicks many, Harrys many; there was only one Joe.

Yet the object singled out for these distinctions was the most modest and unassuming of human beings. Joe conscientiously and habitually underrated himself. Not now from any distressing self-consciousness, or soaring, unsatisfied ambition, but simply and solely because he was without the habit of comparing himself with others, or in fact of thinking critically or otherwise about himself at all.

At thirty the great Auk—great Auk still at twenty-five as at ten years old—had developed into a most presentable and capable member of society, the maturity of excellent mental and physical qualities whose nature it is to be clumsy, unsightly, and inconvenient whilst in the growing stage. His shyness, though the root lay deep, no longer showed itself outwardly and unfavourably in his demeanour. It had been knocked out of him by the necessity he had been forced into of independent action, of acquiring and applying

knowledge of the world and men—the workaday world and men in shirt-sleeves, often with tarred hands and blackened faces, not Cressida's kingdom of flowers, delicate attentions, and evening dress. It was not for nothing that Joe had roughed it in various latitudes, and got acclimatised to risks and hardships. Perpetual and miscellaneous exertion had taught him habits of thought, and of quick and practical observation. He was anything but a genius, could boast no special gift, not even a highly cultured intellect; but he had a rarely well-trained and active intelligence, which showed itself in his countenance and manner, and, together with much quiet good sense and self-possession, gave him an almost exaggerated influence over the weak-minded and volatile among his juniors.

He was just home from Mexico and California on sick-leave. The sea-voyage had half-cured him already, and the convalescent felt something of an impostor, and was hankering to go to work again. How vehemently he had longed for England whilst incapacitated by fever! But now his foot was on his native heath, or granite pavement rather, his Perversity felt decidedly outlandish and floored, and especially in the crack Bond-street hotel, where he had quartered himself whilst he transacted his London business and recruited his battered wardrobe.

The change from the backwoods to Mayfair in thirteen days was too complete and abrupt to be comfortable. Foremost in the wild country he had come from, in Piccadilly he felt at a disadvantage, and acknowledged the meanest dandy that lounged over the Hyde-Park railings as in some sort his superior. All were more up to the time of day, more self-suf-

ficient and *en rapport* with things about them, than he. Yet it was for these very qualities that he was counted conspicuous, and accustomed to be looked up to, in the Far West. He had no vanity to wound, and it was not a sense of slight, but simply the novel situation and altered relations with his fellow-creatures, that made him feel queer and isolated, till mentally he compared himself to a large sturgeon suddenly plumped down among the gold fish in a drawing-room aquarium.

One week in London had been quite enough for him, and he had half-resolved to abridge his holiday, make short work of the business—or pleasure—of paying his respects to his relations, and apply for a temporary appointment of which he had heard the other day. He could not be pointlessly idle and enjoy himself, he discovered now. He had lost the habit, and the taste with it. There was nothing to draw him in one direction more than in another, and he pined a little, as the strongest man, without ties, can pine. Kennedy's parents were dead, his sisters married; he had no brothers, only a worthless cousin, whose vocation in life seemed to be to put Joe's good-nature to the test. He was very much alone in the world, and the fact is never so obnoxious to a man as when he is out on a holiday.

Why not marry, said common sense to him sometimes, if solitude does not suit you? There were whys. First, he would have had to ask his bride to accept with him, not only expatriation, but a great deal of roughing it in trying climates. Secondly, half the man clung hard to bachelor independence. For love he could have let it go; but—it might be prejudice, narrowness, or insensibility—it seemed to Joe as if he

could not care for the girls of the present day, though miscellaneous their types. Fast girls disgusted him, learned girls horrified him, 'unidead girls' bored him, fashionable girls overawed him, and homely girls satisfied him least of all. Mere barbarian and backwoodsman though he chose to consider himself, with all his rough hands, his heart was rather fastidious. This was the third why: that unconsciously he had come to try all girls by the Cressida standard. If he had never known her, it might have been different. One evening, on returning to his hotel, he found two letters in familiar hands awaiting him.

One was from his cousin Tom, the other Cressida's writing—doubtless an answer to a communication of his own a few days ago. Among a cartload of treasures and trifles from beyond the seas, which he had brought over for his kinsfolk and acquaintances, he had picked out the choicest and best to send to Cressida—queer many-coloured boxes in scented woods, carved ivory ornaments, woven grass mats, burnouses, fearfully and wonderfully embroidered in gold thread and silk.

He read his cousin's letter first, as we give the precedence to disagreeable things, in a hurry to get them over. Cressida's note should be the sugarplum after the physic. Tom's communications were always requests for money, and Joe hated of all things to have to refuse aid, as was sometimes unavoidable. Already he was running over the probable contents in his head. 'I am more ashamed than I can express to have once more to throw myself on your generosity,' &c.; 'a run of the most unheard-of ill luck,' &c.; 'a loan of fifty pounds will save me and mine from impending ruin,' &c.; 'most positively the last time

I shall appeal.' Much to his relief and surprise he found the prodigal writing to mention that a timely tenant had turned up for Monks' Orchard. A Mrs. de Saumarez had taken it for the year. A beggarly rent was to be paid—a few hundreds—that the tenants might easily clear off the grapes in the greenhouse. But at all events the place would be lived in, kept dry and in order; whereas now everything was spoiling from rot and damp, and the difficulty was to let it at all. The petition—there was a petition of course, for nothing but urgent need would induce Tom to take up a pen—was that Joe would oblige him by running down to Monks' Orchard to settle a few necessary matters personally with the steward, and going over the place with him to investigate the dilapidations. Tom was prevented from going himself, having, he wrote, accidentally sprained his knee. 'Or more likely,' groaned Joe, 'the truth is that he hasn't the ready-money to pay his railway fare, although he does write on extra cream-laid, with a splendid stamped monogram.'

Tom's life was a chapter of accidents. His cousin had no patience left for him and his jeremiades and his white lies and his carefully-cultivated misfortunes. But Joe was soft-hearted, and had never refused his help when he could give it; and glad to-day that there was nothing that called for a 'No,' he put the note aside, and turned to the sugarplum—Cressida's inviting-looking little letter, a nice long one too.

He was all out in his calculations this evening. Here lay the reverse of a pleasant surprise for him.

He read it through—his countenance became more and more intent as he bent over the lines, returning again and again to those that told the news.

'Going to be married.' Well, it was not a catastrophe or a disaster of any sort. Why, then, must he go walking violently up and down the room? He did not feel tragic, or even 'cut up' by this piece of good news. Only the first sensation he experienced was much as if some one had just given him a violent slap in the face.

What a fool he was! To think he should have minded it so much, or minded it at all! He had admired her—O yes—and liked her too; but the very frankness of their friendship was due to the fact that, as if by tacit mutual consent, not an ounce of treacherous sentiment had been allowed to enter in; and as to the notion of a possible marriage between them, Joe from the outset had set it down as an absurdity, and had never entertained the idea except in the way that one sometimes entertains absurdities, as such.

As if, then, she were to remain single to save him a pang! Sooner or later the event was due. For all that, Joe will not soon forget that nasty biting sensation, that only mitigated by degrees, as he put down the letter, and submitted patiently to feel out the situation. Trains of emotion have their logical sequence, like trains of thought.

There was a mixture of pleasure. The exquisite wording of *Cressida's* letter fell like balm in one place that only made the wound caused in another by the import seem deeper, by reimpresing upon him what excellent friends they had been.

But so cordial a friendship as theirs, however sensible and open, belongs to those—they include most—which the marriage of either party must dissolve. It was natural that Joe should feel his pending loss. Had he ever seen

any chance of a preference for him on her part, or had his position been more promising, his retrospect now might have been of another sort. But Joe's disposition, which was nothing if not rational, had given the safest, soberest hue to his relations with her. He was not romantic or even imaginative, and had a very low idea of his own power of attraction for girls with subtle characters like *Cressida*, whilst acknowledging the deplorable fact that his taste rather inclined him to such than to plain, downright unsophisticated creatures like *Millie* or *Jeanie Alleyne*, for instance, either of whom would probably have been ready to follow him to New Guinea if he had asked her. It is your men of culture who, like *Stephen Halliday*, have fallen somewhat out of love with the daughters of culture; and who turn away from the complexities, the fine-drawn questionings, and searchings of heart of women whose characters are nothing more than the feminine counterpart of their own, the product of over-refinement of thought and of feeling,—these, with reason or without, they fear or distrust as unreal, and even prefer to wed reality in the form of a hoiden of low degree, to educate her afterwards, so far as they think desirable, and no farther. But Joe was not so advanced. It had never even occurred to him to simplify his ideal, which happened to be very far removed from a rough diamond.

The last man in the world to indulge in a hopeless passion. In his case it would not be pathetic, but only serve to make him ridiculous. It was his rule—a rule that sprang as much from his temperament as from principle—to shut the door on what promised only disappointment.

Not a bit of love on either side,

thanks to which this—and this alone—among Cressida's friendships of the sort, had run evenly and pleasantly from the beginning. She felt so thoroughly at ease, so particularly herself when with Joe, who neither exalted her into a sort of glorified Astarte, like Norbert, nor depreciated her as a passing fair, perhaps, but passing foolish, virgin, as did Stephen Halliday, whose judgment and principles seemed to cry shame on his heart for caring about her. Honest Joe understood her in some ways better than her lovers; he knew her faults, and liked her none the less for them.

He now tried to recall Norbert's personality. He remembered him, very vaguely, as a silent, reserved, delicate, nice-looking lad, whom he had rather disliked than otherwise, thinking he looked conceited and gave himself airs. It occurred to him now mournfully that this had probably been but incipient jealousy; and another strong impression that possessed him on reading Cressida's letter—the impulsive conviction that, in an evil moment, she had drifted into an engagement that did not augur well for her happiness—was, no doubt, nothing more: jealousy that Norbert should have succeeded where he, Joe, had never ventured to try. Then he remembered that young Alleyne was always talked of as a sort of musical genius, whilst poor Joe knew not Wagner from Mozart, Beethoven from Bach, and, privately, was persuaded that Cressida sang better than any professional artiste living.

'The fellow must be three-and-twenty. I daresay he's turned out a nice sort of lad, and more of a ladies' man than some of us,' said Joe, looking rather comically at his rough browned hands,—and he has an uncle who's made of

money,—good prospects, and a decent position to offer the girl he wants to marry. He's a lucky young dog, I know.'

That was his ultimatum. It left him very much depressed. He was booked to go with a party of friends to the theatre the same evening, after that to supper with them, and they needs must end up with Cremorne. Never had the dreariest lecture, the prosiest sermon, the heaviest duty-party, so bored and disgusted him as the mirth into which he submitted to be untimely dragged. How ugly and coarse the shows appeared, the staring paint and rouge, the 'got-up' faces of the women, so tawdry and vulgar, the jokes so stale, the tone so loud and jarring! The veriest Puritan could not have been more unaffectedly repelled than Joe—the reverse of a Puritan, and tolerant to the extreme, both in word and in deed. He recognised that he was in a murderous humour that night, and made great and fatiguing exertions not to let it appear. But if before this he had felt like a goat among sheep in the fold of London society and amusements, these would now, he foresaw, become more unpalatable than ever. He was glad of the definite object which his cousin's business afforded him for leaving town the next day. He meant to start at once for Monks' Orchard. It would also give him an opportunity of going to congratulate Cressida in person.

It was no use to try and keep his mind from harping on that one string, that one tune—Cressida. Mrs. Norbert Alleyne would be somebody else.

He dreamt to it, breakfasted to it, thought about it all the way to the station, and whilst waiting on the platform mused on still.

'I should like to find out if she's happy. That, after all, is

what matters. Can that slack, helpless, moonstruck, lackadaisical youngster deserve her, I wonder? I hope she isn't marrying him out of charity or commiseration, or anything of that sort. It's a huge mistake; people find it out afterwards. But she is so impressionable, so considerate, so wax-hearted. Well, I only want to make sure it's all right and she's content with that muff—he *was* a muff; Ethelred the Unready they called him at school—and then the sooner the Raunche sees me back again the better for me, I expect. Hullo! By George, why, there he is!

Who, indeed, but Norbert should just have come on to the platform!

'Napping, as usual,' thought Joe severely, as he watched him; 'head in air—brains all over the shop. He'll be striding over the edge of the platform if he doesn't mind.'

But Norbert, absent and dreamy though he was, shared the peculiar fortune of somnambulists, and had never been known to come to any grief in his fits of abstraction.

'Put that fellow in the Raunche,' thought Joe pityingly, 'he'd be no more good than a girl. If I halloo out at him and startle him, over on the line he'll go, to a dead certainty. "Alleyn, I say; Alleyn, how are you?"'

Norbert stared for a moment blankly, then remembered.

'So it's you, is it? I didn't know you were in England. Where are you off to?'

'Lullington. Your station too, I expect.'

'Yes. I'm off duty, and going to Greywell for Christmas.'

They travelled down together. Joe had three hours in which to form and pass judgment on Cressida's choice.

'Well, well, the fellow's wonderfully improved,' he acknowledged to himself frankly, when

they parted at Lullington and went off—Joe to the family estate; Norbert to look in at home, leave his luggage, and rush off to Fernawold instantan. Two years, Joe supposed, had done a lot for him. Forty-eight hours of happiness had done more—more towards metamorphosing the boy into the man—the chrysalis into the perfect imago. But how should Joe, in whom an exactly similar improvement had been brought about by exactly opposite causes, namely, by the difficulties and dangers that had beset his path, a *régime* of contest being needed to bring out his sterling qualities—how was he to jump to the conclusion that if Norbert's conversation was more fluent than heretofore, his bearing firmer, his expression brighter and clearer, the whole man more 'fit,' as Joe put it, this was due to a stroke of chance, not to the slow work of time?

But just as an exotic plant can expand only under such a high temperature or powerful sun as would stifle or scorch wild and hardier growths, so Norbert, under the influence of a kind of preternatural contentment, such as might enervate or paralyse many, first showed what he could be.

Up to now, all ways of pleasantness had seemed to him so distant, so illusive, as to lie beyond the limits of his cramped horizon. To dwell on them was pernicious, as it made present things more irksome than ever. His was one of those simple, definite natures with just one or two strong points of temperament. Not for them are the byways and cross-roads, the ramifications and subtleties of life. But give such a one leave and power to exist for his—hobbies call them, or ruling passions, or whatever best describes Nature's dictates, and he is the happiest of men. As a set-off to this, and

by virtue of the same quality, if things go against him, he becomes the most miserable.

Norbert's nature gave him two chances—for best or worst. A rare musical faculty and bias, and an almost equally rare faculty for an absorbing affection.

The free exercise of the first had been always denied him, tied and bound as he was by a chain of circumstances to his uncle's service. At the very moment when a possibility of breaking it, by means of a desperate move, is opened, chance number two drops into his hands—a gift so sweet, so welcome, so assured, that to grasp it, there is nothing he would not relinquish.

How it transforms and idealises the self-same future that had hung over him like a curse! What, a few months hence, will be so many hours of daily mechanical drudgery at a desk, to set against the spending of a single one with Cressida! The medium in which he was suffering a sort of gradual extinction, like a candle in vitiated air, becomes acceptable and healthful at last.

That evening was Norbert's. Poor Joe, lonely amid the dreariness of the home of his grandfathers, went round examining dilapidations with the steward, giving orders for repairs, and in the lowest possible spirits. His footsteps echo after him in a melancholy manner as he paces through the dismantled rooms and down the long picture-gallery where an array of tall, proud, patrician-looking ancestral Kennedys gaze out of their dusty canvases on their forsaken premises and their degenerate, impoverished representative.

Cressida meanwhile had come across the fields to meet Norbert, who found her waiting for him like an Oread in the bit of upland

wood bordering the meadow. Then followed a golden hour or two for one at least of those who had met.

The house was all too small for Norbert and his happiness. The winter had not yet begun in earnest, and they lingered out of doors. The last autumn primroses flowered, the December birds sang songs for them. Norbert was beginning fully to take in his felicity, which at the first he had been too overwrought to do. Every word, look, and movement of Cressida's brought a fresh delight to him, coming with the added charm the feeling of appropriation gives.

Cressida, for her part, was grateful to him at least for not talking love in commonplaces. The billing and cooing of betrothed couples had always made her laugh. She had a dim idea that the feeling she had inspired in this particular quarter was of no ordinary sort; but was not sorry that it kept him tongue-tied on the subject, forbade ebullitions of sentiment, to which she could not have felt responsive. He was a dear good boy, she thought contentedly; and the smile with which she looked at the delicate ring he left on her finger when they parted that night was a sweet and happy one.

A week had elapsed since her engagement; and she was agreeably surprised to find she had not begun to repent it, as she had confidently expected to do. She repented so many things. Who, in these analytical days, puts his hand to the plough without looking back again and again? But look where she would, she saw no cause, no loop-hole for anything but self-complacency. Everybody was so delighted with her, so eager to say pleasant things. She wondered how she could have hesitated so long.

The next day brought a letter of congratulation which she had been expecting with singular impatience, but opened with a singular half-reluctance and dread. It was from Elise.

'So you have really and truly made up your mind to the leap in the dark. Nobody shall cry Hear, hear! and clap hands louder and more zealously than I. Yes, dear, you have my hearty approval, however little you may care for such an empty blessing.

'The wisdom of Elise de Saumarez, *née* Carroll. The longer a maiden stands apart and looks at matrimony askance, studiously, the farther she recedes from it; for the more puzzling selection becomes. But girls are born into the world blind, like kittens; so these Heaven-made things we call marriages come off occasionally. Your eyes, for a kitten's, were remarkably wide open; you inclined to be critical; and I feared that you, seeing too well the worth of the gifts the gods provide, of this sort, might decline them. Now I hear you distinctly reviling me as a sceptic, a cynic, and worse. Of course we understand that for a limited period you are sworn in, a special constable of romance. Be as enthusiastic as you like, my little Revivalist, and for as long as you may; only don't take it amiss in your senior, in that, after such an experience as mine has been, I search my vocabulary diligently, but cannot find any expressions of high-flown congratulations that seem to me appropriate. You will get plenty of these, however, from your maiden aunts. Take one or two of a rather less sentimental tone from me.

'You are going to step at once into a capital social position, with freedom and power to enjoy yourself. People who set up for de-

spising money in these days are either hypocrites or simpletons. Nobody in his sane mind does so conscientiously, least of all can a woman—to whom it is of much more consequence than to a man—as her sphere is social; and nothing else, even in that sphere, so helps to put her on a par with man. (Here you exclaim against me as a horrid egotist, and fling down the letter in disgust. But you pick it up again presently, and proceed.) I ask you, is it my doing that I was born of an egotistical age, its legitimate daughter? You, Mouse, are another. I conjure you by the grand piano, which shall be my tribute of approbation to you on the occasion, to say if you could have found your earthly paradise in love and a crust? That was very well for our unsophisticated progenitors. Culture has improved away in us the appreciation for these rudiments of well-being. So far, so bad, it may be said; but culture has created in us new likings and tastes; and therefore we can live on for the gratification of these—if we can afford it.

'More last words, if you care to read them. Young unmarried people are apt to live and think as if the world was for them and their spring-time only. Mouse, methinks, has an inkling of the falseness of this. Her only real life may begin after she is married.'

Although this letter made Cressida feel decidedly uncomfortable, it engrossed her; and she found more to ponder over there than in Norbert's morning missive, previously read through. She was still at it when a visitor was announced:

'Mr. Kennedy.'

She was expecting him. He had sent a line to say that he was at Monks' Orchard, and hoped to call the same day.

Joe had lectured himself back into a kind of reconciliation with things as they are and must be, and met her with his old frank smile, and in the old frank tone of sterling friendship.

Never a trace of coquetry or *dilettante* grace in Cressida's manner to Joe Kennedy. They fell into a thoroughly natural, refreshing conversation. Joe talked—not at first about her engagement, but of himself; his experiences and adventures in the backwoods. Some of them were comic enough; or, at any rate, sounded humorous in the recital, and made her laugh heartily. All this recruited her spirits, which had been at a decidedly low ebb when he came in.

Then she recollected the presents, and thanked him for them. Joe confessed he had had his fears lest he might have been sending the traditional white elephant; he was always at his wife's end when he had to choose things for ladies. Cressida reassured him on that score.

It was curious, it was preposterous, how straightforward, how sincere, how good she always felt when talking to Joe. She had two selves, one of which kept close watch, though without control, over the other. That second flightier self of hers, in abeyance just now, thought oddly, how, if every man were like Joe, she would never flirt, or torment people, or lower herself in any way, but talk and behave on all occasions like a model maiden or wife, as the case might be.

No wonder that Joe persisted in liking her as she not only appeared but really was to him.

The time sped on pleasantly. Joe felt that his visit, from the point of view of etiquette, had lasted long enough.

'I mustn't go away forgetting

what I came on purpose for,' he observed presently, with significance.

'Ah, you came to congratulate me,' said Cressida, with a smile; 'every one who calls or writes to me now does it for that expressly. I begin to think there never was such an easy way of deserving congratulations and pleasing everybody. If I were a man, and had taken a double first-class, or won the Victoria Cross, the applause couldn't have been more spontaneous and universal.'

'Then perhaps you'd rather dispense with any more that may be still to come,' he said, laughing awkwardly, 'and let mine be understood.'

She laughed back problematically, and there was a pause.

'Were you surprised?' she asked.

'Yes—or no,' he said, feeling constrained and clumsy. 'One is surprised at nothing nowadays. I mean—I mean—' he stammered, as Cressida laughed heartily; and poor Joe became sensible that he was putting his foot in it at every step. He stopped, and then concluded, in an apologetic way that was not intentional, but which he could not help, 'You know I have not seen anything of Norbert Alleyne since he was a boy.'

'He is my age,' she replied; 'but if everybody thinks and talks of him as a boy still, it is because of a kind of youthfulness in him that I think he will never lose.'

It was true. Even Joe felt that in Norbert, and that it might be attractive.

'It was not because of any unworthiness on his part that I never, somehow, had thought of you and him in the same breath.'

'O, if you come to worth,' said Cressida playfully, 'it is he who deserves a much, much better somebody than myself.'

Here was the cue for Joe to give his congratulations, and he gave them accordingly. They were not of the common ring—the good wishes sentimental nor good wishes conventional—but just a few rough-spoken words, so heartfelt, generous, and straightforward that Cressida was touched.

‘Do you really mind whether I am happy or not?’ she asked wistfully.

‘What a question from you to me! I mind particularly,’ he replied, growing very red.

‘I’m sorry,’ she said frankly; ‘because, do you know, I sometimes think I shall never be really happy—at least, never for long.’

‘Why?’

‘I haven’t the knack,’ she replied, laughing.

‘But perhaps you have never had a fair trial till now,’ said Joe, looking grave, though trying not to speak too seriously, as he rose to take leave.

Throughout this half hour he might flatter himself on having kept miles off the faintest emotional weakness. It was only now that it had come to saying good-bye,—for it was good-bye to that three years’ steady friendship that had been, if not the greatest, at all events the choicest pleasure of his life,—and he took her hand and tried to think of her as a bride and a stranger for him, that a mist came over his eyes, a stone rose in his throat, and Joe perceived he was on the brink of making a fool of himself.

‘At all events,’ he said hastily, ‘you must let your friends think of you as happy now.’

‘Friends!’ repeated Cressida, in a low voice, but with bitterness; ‘it seems to be my fate to have—only lovers—no friends.’

Joe, with a mighty effort, had squashed the germ of interloping

feeling, and replied quietly—but there was something solemn in the simplicity of his avowal—

‘One—whilst I live! If ever you want a friend to serve you, you know you have one in me.’

‘I have—I have,’ repeated Cressida to herself when he was gone. To him she had replied only by the gentlest pressure of hand and a glance of gratitude and trust. ‘Thank Heaven, there are some good people still left above ground!’

One more incident was to mark that day. Late in the evening a parcel arrived for her. The last days had brought several, and she was already prospectively *blase* on the subject of the miscellaneous gifts—from silver plate to photograph books—that they might be expected to contain; so she opened the case rather carelessly and mechanically. Inside was Mr. Marriott’s present—a *parure* of diamonds, such as her soul had desired once upon a time.

She flushed a little as she took them out. Her father looked at them with a kind of awe, and ventured a few timid speculations on their worth. ‘I shouldn’t wonder if they cost him a thousand pounds or more, perhaps. Do you not think, dear, it would be safer to deposit them at the bank at Lulington?’ There was something ludicrous in this seriousness, and she began to laugh. But when she was up-stairs and alone with her prize, for a while she could not take her eyes off the flashing, sparkling things. They riveted her with a cold fascination.

She will never envy young duchesses and operatic queens again, she thinks. Who would have thought the old financier would have had such very good taste?

She tried them on. Horribly becoming things they were, as she

knew—the right phosphorescence to set off that strange, delicate, transparent countenance of hers.

She laughed, observing that they made her feel wicked, and then put them away, wondering what the exact charm of such things might be, and whether it would wear off—finding matter for musing some time longer on the philosophy of diamonds.

‘There is not the slightest question about it,’ whispered Cressida to herself, as she laid her head on the pillow, kissed Norbert’s little ring and wished it good-night, ‘I—I like being engaged.’

CHAPTER VII.

TWIXT CUP AND LIP.

THERE was real sunshine in the house of Alleyne. The lesson how to prize and make the most of the smallest mercies was one that had long been learnt by the females in that establishment. The news of Norbert’s engagement came to them like a godsend; not merely as a pleasant stir and a bright ray breaking on the dulness and owls’ light of Greywell, but because it brought with it the definite solution of grave troubles and of anxieties reckoned incurable. Like the skilful *dénouement* of a five-act drama—where some undreamt-of turn or fortuitous accident rights matters just when they looked most hopeless, and tragedy hemmed us in on every side—it swept the sky clear as by miracle.

Colonel Alleyne would have been genial if he could; this he showed by his silence. He had so entirely lost the habit of opening his mouth except to say disagreeable things, that the Neapolitans might as reasonably expect Vesuvius to spout loaves and

fishes, as might his family to hear pleasant speeches fall from the Colonel’s lips. Quiescence, as with the volcano, was the utmost that could be expected of him when in his best humour; and never, within his children’s recollection, had he been so quiescent as now.

The reflection of Norbert’s beatitude told upon Millie and Jeanie. The new and delightful mine of conversation and conjecture opened to them was a treat in itself, and they busied themselves in interesting speculations. Where would Norbert and his wife live? How well Cressida would look as a bride! It was a model, nay an ideal, *matrimonio*. No money troubles, no family difficulties, no drawbacks on either side—nothing but tastes to gratify and the wherewithal so to do. Millie would picture them to herself with a certain awe in the London house they would have, leading a brilliant sort of life, that dazzled her like an Arabian Night’s Entertainment. Jeanie watched them with another very different feeling uppermost. She was not jealous. Such love and happiness were too entirely beyond her own horizon. ‘Where no comparison, there is no envy.’ Flower-girls do not envy queens, nor peasants premiers, nor playwrights Shakespeare. Nor Jeanie happy lovers. But a mere fraction of the affection she saw lavished on Cressida would, for herself, have contained the raw material for a life’s happiness, and she would have asked nothing better than to repay it with a life’s devotion. So what seemed to her first and foremost in the story of their lot was their mutual attachment.

As for Mrs. Alleyne, her poor, troubled face was lit up as it had never been for years. Norbert and his father at one at last;

Norbert contented, and secured from the smash or dead-lock which those irreconcilables—his poet's temperament and his man-of-business position—threatened to bring him to. No wonder her joy and gratitude knew no bounds. She could have knelt to Cressida for bringing this about, and saving that boy—her best beloved.

See Cressida, therefore, in the novel, unsolicited character of ministering angel and benefactress in general to the family of Alleyne. The honour was something of an incubus; at times she felt embarrassed and more than half an impostor. So much gratitude, she feared, she had not deserved. She was angry with herself for wearying of poor Mrs. Alleyne's motherly rigmaroles and the sisterly *épanchements* of Millie and Jeanie; but weary of them she did, and that soon. On the other hand, she was deeply glad of Norbert's happiness, and the consciousness of being somehow of great good to several people was soothing and pleasant in its way.

There was just one soul in the Greywell establishment upon whom the news had told very differently.

When Norbert, after that memorable hour over Mr. Marriott's aquarium, had broken or rather blurted out the facts to Fan, on returning to his lodgings, she thought he must be crazy or joking. She would not believe it.

Norbert was naturally a little hurt. When Fan, aghast, saw it was earnest, she found there was no sort of safety except in holding her tongue. For her heart and head were in a terrible tumult.

That Norbert should renounce a vocation so passionately cherished—a vocation to which every ordinance of Nature seemed to have called him, and which hither-

to no opposition could force out of his thoughts—renounce it cheerfully, too, and willingly devote himself for the remainder of his life to money-grubbing (singularly indifferent to money's worth though he was), perhaps to acquiring a taste for it—all this to the ardent girl seemed at first sight an outrage to all reason: as it were, giving the lie to the whole of his life until now.

But the wisdom in her—and, for sixteen, she was not deficient in that commodity—kept repeating that it was exactly what might have been expected. 'All for love, and the world (even art and its sweets and its laurels) well lost,' is a maxim upon which the artist-born will act for evermore, even when the rest of the world have given it up.

She recognised now that Norbert must have had and hidden this passion in his heart for a long while. She could also surmise its present power over him. Weak, timid, quiet, seemingly shiftless natures are always those to astonish us by the depth and tenacity of their attachments. So Cressida to Norbert is all in all, and she, Fan, nothing particular.

It is an old stale story that sisters are unreasonable and unsympathetic over their brothers' love-affairs, which, seen through the spectacles of petty jealousy, appear to them as a mutual amiable delusion. Fan theoretically despised them for it; yet now she was put to the test, a rebellious voice arose within her, forbidding the bans. Was it jealousy? She had double cause. First, Norbert's want of confidence in the past, and present oblivion of higher aims; and secondly, the loss to herself of Cressida's heart, which must be all gone, or going, to her lover. So bursts another bubble: that brief romantic friendship

which had arisen between the two girls. '*La destinée n'ouvre point une porte sans en fermer une autre.*'

However, there was the fact. Fan decided that she was an old stupid, and as blind as a mole into the bargain. Then, with that loyalty to her more generous impulses which was the keynote of her character, she took her cue, telling her to efface herself, and patiently to play the 'walking lady' where before she had taken the lead. Only she secretly swore to herself that she would never fall in love—*never*! People were so ridiculous!

It was in March. Cressida had come down from the rectory to stay a few days at Greywell, previous to Norbert's departure. His brief holiday was over, and he was starting immediately for Axbury, where he was to hold a temporary post of honour for some months as deputy-manager to the local branch of his uncle's bank. The appointment, besides taking him a hundred and fifty miles off, would throw upon him an amount of responsibility that must keep him tied, barely giving him time to rush up now and then for a few hours, on a flying visit to Lullington and Cressida. This, then, would be their last meeting with freedom to lengthen out the hours of leisure—their last until he left Axbury in July, by which time all their arrangements would have been made, and the wedding would follow very shortly upon his return.

Cressida was looking prettier than ever. She had made up her mind to be very happy, and for the last six weeks had succeeded without an effort; they had been composed of a series of pleasant little surprises and rising interests, not yet full grown into irksome cares and duties.

She enjoyed, of all things, map-

ping out her future with Norbert. It amused her to talk over their house and household arrangements. What an inimitable model of taste she will set to her superiors! They laughed as they thought of how the Marriotts would not fail to try and appropriate their happy thoughts in furnishing and decorating, and reproduce them in caricature.

They discussed all their prospective *ménage*, down to the minutest details, and their talk was apt to run chiefly on such practical prosaic matters. Even as an accepted lover, Norbert remained the least demonstrative of men. It was really not astonishing that Fan should have never divined what lay at the bottom of his heart. The nonchalance of his manner—an effect of shyness and reserve—easily led people to think of him as self-absorbed. It had needed Cressida's *finesse* to perceive how the land lay; and even now the moments were rare when he let his feeling flash out. But vividly conscious as she had been of it all along, she could not to herself feign ignorance of how it possessed him now. It might flatter, but it oppressed her at times, and then she would try to shut her eyes to it. It was the only part about her engagement she did not like—this heartfelt, ideal, unalloyed adoration. It made things seem serious, and dragged her into a depth of reality she wished to skim merely. Moments came when she was haunted by an uneasy sense of her inability to go on meeting it sympathetically, or a sense of acting, of art (this never failed her), as needful to make her say the right thing. It was something more than the old story of love on the one side, and let love on the other. The word had an utterly different significance for him and for herself. He did not know it,

but she did; and she felt most ashamed when she found herself playing up best to his transcendental state of mind. Well, men carry dilettantism into their politics, their religion, their philosophy, their morality; what wonder if women carry it into their love?

The Alleynes made almost a religious duty of leaving Norbert and Cressida *tête-à-tête*. The girls stood in old-fashioned awe of the presence of betrothed lovers, and the schoolroom, by tacit consent, was treated as an adytum into which no third person would venture to penetrate. As to Fan, she would as soon have put her unsanctified head into a lion's den as over that threshold during Norbert's last afternoon, which it was supposed he and Cressida would naturally desire to spin out to the utmost.

Norbert had brought down his friend Lewis Lefroy with him from London. As a rule he seldom ventured on such a step, deeming that 'May you stay at Greywell' would be a goodly imprecation to hurl at his enemies, and not wishing to expose his friends' good-will to so severe a test as his father's incivility. Norbert's chums were *suspects*, and snubbed accordingly. But now he was for once in high favour, he trusted that some rays of it might reflect on Mr. Lefroy, artist though he chanced to be. Besides, Norbert was not without an after-thought in the matter. Lewis Lefroy was a popular fellow, who took to society of almost any kind. He would amuse the girls, and occupy their eyes, which, if not so numerous as Argus's, seemed to Norbert suddenly to have become at least equally sharp and embarrassing.

The experiment succeeded. Lefroy was friends with everybody in ten minutes. A ready, fluent, elastic, dapper little fellow, neither

a prig nor a dandy, but with something of both, not in the least alarming, who took as much pains to make himself agreeable to Millie and Jeanie as if they had been the President of the Royal Academy's daughters, good-humouredly suffered Fan to deride and persecute him in various ingenious ways, and devoutly admired Cressida from a distance—Cressida, of whom he had heard so much from Norbert, and whom he had been brought down expressly to see. Had his verdict been asked, he must have replied that he thought her eyes dangerous, but they were all for Norbert, of course. Lefroy kept apart, and amused himself very well with the three sisters. All his oldest jests, anecdotes, and superannuated table-talk, useless to him in London, or even in his native town of Axbury, were fresh to Millie and Jeanie, so he was never at a loss for conversation. Then he took sketches of the old abbey at Lullington, caricatured Fan, at her particular request, for her private entertainment, and tried to make a drawing of Cressida on the sly.

The elder sisters were full of genuine, gushing admiration for his nimble wit and dexterity. This pleased him well; for Lefroy had a feminine fondness for sweets, spoiling, and flattery. Nay, one afternoon, as he watched Jeanie lost in smiling wonder and delight over his sketch-book called 'Happy Thoughts in Water-colour,' he began to remark that, though small and pale, she had *rather* a pretty facial outline. There was something appealing, pathetic, in the expression, like the look of a fawning affectionate animal, an attractive touch, of which she was entirely unconscious. More than once he found himself watching her with that half pity that is akin to tenderness.

Lewis Lefroy prided himself on being an outrageous flirt, in a small and unexceptionable way. So far, he had not flirted with Jeanie, but he felt he might begin, if a certain compunction could be got rid of.

Opportunity was not wanting. Mrs. Alleyne was an inexperienced and desultory chaperon. Lefroy was the least dangerous-looking of tame cats; and then (if ever parental imagination did awake), supposing he were to take a fancy to Millie or Jeanie, what of that? True, he was an artist; but, in the first place, he was not dependent on his profession; and, in the second, he had, so to speak, inherited it from his father, a well-to-do Royal Academician; and these facts, in Colonel Alleyne's eyes, placed him apart from, and above, the rabble of scrubby Bohemians. Moreover, the Colonel had not the same superstitious contempt for the brush that he had for the bow; and for the rest, if you are a gentleman at large in the first place, you may be a fireman in the second, if you please, in your leisure hours.

The whole of that afternoon Lefroy had passed with the three girls in the drawing-room. There is nothing in the world he is better fitted for, or enjoys more than kinging it over a lot of women. An old pack of cards has been hunted up, and he is telling the most elaborate fortunes, making the most astounding discoveries, it would seem, respecting the past of the young ladies, and bringing the colour to Jeanie's cheeks by finding curious coincidences between his future and hers. Their paths, he declares, are crossing perpetually, and the powers influencing them are the same.

Romeo and Juliet, as Lefroy calls them, are in the schoolroom. The firelight glows on Cressida's cheek as she sits bending over the

hearth, with a shaggy little dog on her lap—Norbert's last present—which she is nursing affectionately—a lively terrier, with a face all wig and eyes, and that has been christened Quiz, accordingly. How often she has sat there before with Norbert for a *vis-à-vis*! Why should she feel differently to-day? As a fact, she did not. Her engagement seemed to have left her relation to him exactly as before, though now first she had his ring on her finger. Is it that she always loved him, in a way, without knowing it, or—

No, no. She holds to the first belief, as she listens chiefly, and plays with Quiz. Norbert talks, and she gives a word here and there. But love-dialogues are no more to be rendered by making record of the words, than a piece of music can be fully brought by analysis before those who have never heard it. The essence escapes.

They are going over, one by one, the imaginary points of their imaginary drawing-room. There are some bits of furniture at the rectory Cressida means always to have with her—mementoes of old times, of her mother, and Sorrento. Norbert finds a place for them. He happens to mention the piano, on which Cressida observes,

'That piano will always be a reproach to me. I shall never look at it without feeling guilty—for having induced you to abandon your schemes and your first love—St. Cecilia.'

'To forsake the makeshift for the reality,' said Norbert rapidly. 'Give me that, and who cares? Let other people play and sing about it.'

Cressida leant back in her chair, and laughed—a pretty, playful, contented laugh.

'But, Norbert, I am not a saint. Are you so very sure you won't be disappointed in me—leave off

caring about me one of these days, who knows ?

'Folly,' he said, in an undertone ; 'you talk as if we had only met yesterday. Haven't I, all these years, been only wanting your leave to care—as a man can care for nothing else.'

'Dear boy,' she murmured softly, bending forwards, and with a light, caressing, protective movement pushing back the rings of hair from his forehead—just as she had done to Quiz a moment ago.

Norbert—well, he may live long and see not the grave ; he may taste all other life-pleasures, from the lowest to the highest and most intellectual, but will he ever know quite such a sweet hour as that again ?

Alas for Cressida in her un-sanctified complexity of emotion ! she cannot shake off that ghastly sense of insincerity. No Juliet, certainly, could have felt more reluctant at the prospect of her Romeo's departure ; but it was because she dreaded its effect on herself—she hardly knew why, except that for her there was a latent feeling of relief behind in that very prospect.

The society of Lewis Lefroy, fluent and fancy-free, a man to whom she was under no obligation to be serious or even rational, was (tell it not in Gath !) a positive refreshment to her that evening when the whole party met.

Dinner was apt to be gloomy at Greywell. 'Food's funeral,' suggested little Lefroy, in a whisper to Jeanie, making her laugh irrepressibly. It was pretty to see her laugh ; joy came like a welcome stranger into her face, and Lefroy took an artist's pleasure in calling it forth. He and Cressida were the life of the party, in their different ways. *Although* Romeo was going to leave at daybreak, Cressida's spirits ran high that

evening. Everybody could see they were not natural, but entered into her desire not to appear downcast before unsentimental witnesses. It was rather a longing for some distraction that made her act thus. She *felt* dejected enough, in all conscience, but the dejection was of the wrong sort.

Not even their united efforts could chase away the gloom that stuck like dry-rot to the Greywell drawing-room. Little Lefroy talked to Jeanie in whispers, as if he were in church, and feeling so, he said. At nine o'clock, however, it so chanced that Colonel Alleyne had to go out to a meeting in Lullington.

As the door closed upon him, a change came o'er the spirit of the room he had left behind. It was as if the words 'Stand at ease!' had been spoken. Countenances cleared and brightened ; moving and speaking seemed easier, the conversation became general and brisk. Before long Cressida found her way to the piano, and presently began a tarantula-like waltz that proved irresistible.

Lefroy, an inveterate dancer, rose at once, and begged Jeanie to be his partner. She had not the presence of mind to demur, and the next moment the pair were whirling round the room, to the consternation of the old china on the brackets, which trembled visibly as they whisked past, unaccustomed to such evolutions.

Fan quickly followed suit with Millie, whilst Norbert looked on, amused, and his mother's heart sank for the furniture.

Presently Cressida broke off and set down Millie to the piano in her stead, with injunctions to play 'anything in three time,' the National Anthem or the Old Hundredth would do, performed thus, and *presto*. She wanted to take 'just one turn' with Mr. Lefroy.

Poor Millie ! Her wrists ached, yet the pair went on revolving as smoothly and indefatigably as the earth on its axis, and seeming about as likely to leave off. At last a heavy step in the hall came. The effect was magical ; Millie fled from the piano and clutched her worsted work. Cressida flung herself on the ottoman, laughing over her shoulder at Lewis Lefroy, who had snatched up and begun to read the first book within his reach, which chanced to be a volume of sermons, and Colonel Alleyne found his drawing-room as sedate as he had left it.

'Prayers, wine-and-water, and bed,' whispered Lefroy in Cressida's ear, and the three followed in due course.

Lefroy, however, allowed himself the addition of a cigarette. Smoking was prohibited at Greywell, but visitors had a dispensation ; and Lefroy, sitting by the open window in his room,—it was a mild night,—puffed away unmolested.

'Wonderfully pretty girl, Norbert's fiancée,' thought he. 'No, not pretty exactly, but taking. Clever, too. No, not precisely clever, but sensitive, expert, and full of feminine penetration. I positively *must* sketch her face for my "Century of Fair Women,"—a set of drawings of favourite faces of his, and which he hoped might one day reach that figure. 'But how to take down a face like that—that changes every moment.

"I know a maiden fair to see ;

Take care—beware—

She can both false and friendly be—"

La, la, la !' and he fell to whistling the tune rather unsuccessfully. When he got to 'Trust her not,' his memory failed him. He began again and again. The third time, lo, the melody was taken up and the air completed for him by a whistler at the win-

dow beneath. Lefroy was about to applaud, when a door in the passage opened, and a gruff, peremptory voice gave out—

'Norbert, leave off making that noise directly !'

Silence. The door slammed. Presently Lefroy put his head out of the window into the pitchy darkness, and said, in a low voice, cautiously, 'Norbert !'

There came a suppressed burst of laughter—a whisper followed—'Yes. Speak low, please.'

'I didn't know you were in the next box.'

'Yes ; No. 3 on the pit-tier,' replied the whisper.

'Will you have a weed ? or is smoking "taboo" for you here like whistling ?'

'Rather,' with a sigh.

'What a deadly-lively evening it was !' Lefroy rejoined.

'You thought so, did you ?'

'Yes, except for the waltz. But you don't dance—ah, I think you haven't an idea of what you lose.'

'Just tell me, how does Cressida waltz ?'

'Do you really wish to know ?'

'Certainly.'

'Fairly well ; a trifle too light. I am longing to make a sketch of her ; have tried from memory, but I've set myself an impossible task. Would she sit for me some day, I wonder ?'

'Ask her yourself.'

'Well, then, I ask her, myself,' significantly. 'Will you sit to me one of these days ?'

Pause.

'Then you have her answer—Never !' indignantly, and the window shut hastily.

'The wretch !' was Cressida's monologue. 'He knew me all the while ! Really I must, I *must* not let myself go like this. I shall lose my head one of these days, I know I shall.'

Morning has come, and Norbert

starts off for Axbury. Lewis Lefroy goes with him. He is returning to his home in that neighbourhood, and laughingly promises Cressida to look well after her property during the coming months, and keep him out of mischief. He carries a successful *croquis* of Jeanie in his album, where another leaf bears signs of persevering unfinished attempts at a sketch of Cressida for his 'Century of Fair Women.'

Jeanie carries his likeness in her heart.

After breakfast Cressida started to walk back to the rectory, with Fan for a companion and Quiz at their heels. The effect of the parting, which had impressed her like a religious ceremony, had been decided. She was brimming over with good resolutions: never to flirt, not to be extravagant in her *trousseau*, to give up dreaming and speculating: she will take to reading instead, and begs Fan to recommend her 'something solid.' They will begin a course of study together to-morrow.

As to Fan, it is not the first time she has remarked, puzzled, how easy it is with Norbert away and when alone with Cressida to forget this engagement which has made such a change. At such moments it is difficult to believe in that supreme fellowship between her brother and her friend which, in a sense, robs her of both. It has made no visible change in Cressida of any sort.

They cannot, as of yore, take the pleasant way across the Monks' Orchard woods this morning. The new tenants are either arrived or about to arrive, and the lodge-keepers have orders to admit no one who is not bound for the house to the park at all, for which they are not blessed by their neighbours.

'What sort of a person is Mrs. de Saumarez?' asked Fan curious-

ly. 'You never talk to me about her.'

'Mrs. de Saumarez?' Cressida began, with a biting speech on the tip of her tongue, but she thought better of it, and returned evasively, 'She is a lady of a certain age, who—who dresses exceedingly well.'

'What, even *you* say so!' said Fan merrily.

'Yes, even I owe her many hints. But then she has had twenty years' more experience in the science.'

Fan shrugged her shoulders. 'There you get out of my department. I would sooner go and cry oranges than spend a morning with a milliner.'

'Yes; but then,' said Cressida, 'you don't lose much by it. I like you in the funny simple things you wear, like the drapery round a little statue. I should hate to see you in flounces and furbelows, as I hate them in statuary. But it is different for me. I should look a perfect fright if I did not idealise my dress a little.'

'You manage it well somehow,' said Fan, looking admiringly at her friend's graceful figure. 'You have no idea how picturesque you look in that dark-green frippery, and hat and feather, and silver things—a sort of "queen and huntress," who has lost her bow and quiver.'

'And you,' said Cressida reflectively, 'a little Joan of Arc, who only wants her coat of mail to look the character to perfection.'

'After all, Quiz has the best of it,' laughed Fan. 'Look at his fur; how well it grows and sits, and how perfectly hideous any artificial additions would make him!'

Quiz, all unconscious of being held up as a model, was frisking alongside the park-palings they were skirting, sniffing for rabbits as he went.

'So that's all you have to say

about the new lady of the manor,' continued Fan. 'And the young man—have you seen him?'

'Yes,' said Cressida, laughing; 'at least, I have seen his photograph, and I imagine it is much the same thing. He—the photograph—looked in the highest degree pretty and unprincipled, and his stepmother assures me these are his most striking points.'

'He must be a great bear,' said Fan—who held advanced opinions on the subject of property—with decision. 'Look there!' And she pointed to a new board that had been set up with a peremptory warning to trespassers, printed in large capitals. 'I call that a very ugly and bad-principled proceeding indeed. I never think a man has any right to keep such a park as that all for his one pair of eyes.'

'O,' said Cressida, whose feelings were all on the other side of the question, having often coveted the domain for herself, 'of course it is his whilst he rents it, his as much as his hat and gloves, to do what he likes with.'

'Maybe,' said Fan; 'but there are hats and gloves enough in the world—or might be—for everybody; so that there would be no good reason for taking a fancy to other people's. But when it comes to things that can't be multiplied for ever and ever, like old pictures or great libraries or beautiful parks—like Monks' Orchard—I think they ought to be thrown open, not monopolised in this fashion.'

Quiz appeared not only to share Fan's opinion, but to be prepared to act upon it then and there. He gave a short sharp bark, as, having spied or scented the rabbit upon which his heart was set, he suddenly squeezed through a hole in the palings, and vanished.

Whistlings, shouts, threats, entreaties, were tried, and all alike in vain.

'He will be caught in a trap, or suffocated in a rabbit-hole!' exclaimed Cressida, in dismay, full of solicitude for her pet—Norbert's last gift. 'No, that he shan't! Wait here for me, Fan, and hold him if he runs out again. The fence seems broken down a little just there.'

And with an agility, not even beneath Fan's admiration, the young lady clambered over the palings and alighted upon the forbidden ground—a fir-wood, carpeted with dead brambles and bracken and live anemone flowers that starred the ground everywhere. She caught a glimpse of the refractory terrier at some distance scampering through the wood. Cressida darted after, across a thicket, into a little willowy bog, up a ravine, and down again, across a thread of a stream into a hazel-copse. Here Quiz suddenly stopped, thrust his nose into a tuft of grass, and Cressida, breathless, was close upon him, when—

'Hullo, you fellow—what are you after there? Stand! Don't run now, or I'll—'

The imperious voice, sharp intonation, the abrupt interruption, gave her a considerable fright. She obeyed instinctively, and stood still in a panic. The next moment the speaker emerged from the brushwood.

A young gentleman with a gun, well-dressed, good-looking, coming forth to meet his poacher, confronts, instead, a wood-nymph in green—a Diana decidedly appalled. On seeing his fearful confusion, which no earthly amount of self-control, or well-bred nonchalance, could enable him to hide, she recovered her nerves pretty quickly.

'I am so very sorry,' she said contritely, though not without a spark of malice and amusement gleaming in her eye, 'it is my little dog.

He got through the palings, and I was afraid he might get hurt, or do mischief himself, so I—'

'Did you get through the palings too?' he asked, with a smile.

'No; but I got over, and chased and chased him—and had just overtaken and was catching him, when—' And she stopped significantly.

The young man became very red. 'You must forgive me,' he said apologetically. 'It seems that the preserves here have not been looked after of late years, and the Lullington roughs make free with them pretty much as they please; so, when I heard some one in the bushes running away, I took the poacher for granted. What can I do now?'

'Prosecute me according to the utmost rigour of the law,' replied Cressida. 'I was trespassing, if not poaching, you know.'

'At least, let me show my penitence by helping you to find your dog. He went that way, I think.' And he walked along the path with her, whistling and shouting to the dog at intervals, but bestowing the chief part of his attention on Cressida, who on her side was not so taken up with the chase but that she perceived that her companion's glance was expressive of an admiration that was decidedly embarrassing.

'You look quite pale,' he said, in a melancholy tone; 'I am afraid you were startled.'

'I was, desperately,' she answered; 'and I think if I had been the poacher you took me for, I would rather have run away and been shot than have stood my ground and faced you.'

'What! Did I look so forbidding—such a ruffian as that?' he said, with a disconcerted air, as of one very much taken aback, and as if he did not know that his face was an excellent piece of work

which erred, if it erred at all, on the side of over-slenderness and refinement of feature.

Cressida did not answer; and Quiz came to the rescue at this moment by suddenly popping up his head out of a bush by the path. Cressida made a dart at him and secured him in her arms.

The young man looked a little disappointed at this speedy termination of affairs.

'Thank you so much,' she said, turning to him; 'and now I will go back, please.'

'But how?'

'As I came.'

'At least allow me to show you round to the lodge.'

'But I have a friend—a young lady—waiting for me in the road.'

'Indeed you need not return that way,' he urged; 'there is a little gate in the palings close by. I have the key in my pocket, and can let you through.'

'Thank you,' said Cressida, really glad to be relieved from the necessity of repeating her feat.

She had of course identified her new acquaintance almost immediately, and it was natural she should feel at ease talking to him. He would know her name, and she saw he was burning with curiosity to find it out; but she was quite determined not to gratify him, and his hints and leading questions were frustrated.

As he unlocked the door and lifted his hat, he expressed his hope that he was forgiven, or that at least at some other time he might have the opportunity of making his peace, adding, 'But I am afraid the first impression has been a very unfavourable one.'

'I won't deny that your first address was original and rather brusque,' she replied mirthfully; 'but never mind, I see now that that is only your poacher voice.'

A few steps along the road
brought her to where Fan was
waiting impatiently.

'Cressida, what in the world
has befallen you?'

'Hush, hush!' said Cressida,

laughing irrepressibly. 'An ad-
venture, Fan; the wood is haunt-
ed!'

'Haunted! What, by Mrs.
Kennedy's ghost?'

'No, by its own master!'



Of all the flowers that spring bestows,
My Mary loves the violet best,
And e'en before the gaudy rose
Invites its fragrance to her breast.

But ere a few short hours are fled,
Its freshness gone, its beauty past!
Ah, why on such a genial bed
Could'st thou not live, and longer last?

Perchance inured to chilling showers,
And early spring's yet feeble rays,
Her heart o'er thee too warmly pours
The light of love that round it plays.

Or is it that thou foundest there
Such beauty with such goodness vie,
That, piqued, outshone, in deep despair
Thou droop'st thy purple head to die?

F. J. T.

NOBLEMEN IN BUSINESS.

ENGLISH people have frequently betrayed a good deal of sensitiveness at Napoleon's celebrated criticism that we are a 'nation of shopkeepers.' It all depends on the definition—in what we consider the shopkeeping to consist. The old Greeks had a prejudice against retailing—*καπηλευσις* was one of their contemptuous words—because they associated it with a petty retailing spirit. But it is not at all true that littleness of mind must necessarily accompany littleness of transactions. There is a famous sentence of Hebrew writ: 'The cities whose merchants were princes, and their traffickers the honourable of the earth.' The merchants of Venice were statesmen and princes; they are for ever recognisable by their pictures and palaces. All through our mediæval cities we have the combination of business and nobility. Nor are our London merchants, in their honest broadcloth, inferior to those who once wore the Tyrian dye or the Venetian velvet. The spirit of commerce now runs like a fibre through all orders of the community, binding together class with class and interest with interest. The present age witnesses the somewhat curious phenomenon of 'noblemen in business.' There was a time when it was thought a great thing for a trader to be raised to the peerage; at present the peers seem busily rushing into the ranks of trade. Every one now can give a list of titled people with connections in business. There is a current rumour to the effect that a great peer is a sleeping partner in one of the

largest retail businesses in the West-end. It is well known that the brothers-in-law of a princess are engaged in commerce. The sons of the Duke of Argyll are pretty well content to lay aside their titles when engaged in business transactions. It has also transpired that Royalty itself—George IV., at least when Prince of Wales—had a business share in one of the London morning papers. Business has sent its fibres throughout all the country, and no class of the community have greater commercial interests than our aristocracy.

The English are emphatically a commercial people; but it is not less true that we are essentially an aristocratic people, and that amongst all classes of the community there is an unmistakable feeling of regard for those who occupy exalted stations. The subscription-list which has a noble lord at its head is likely to be filled far quicker, and with much more respectable sums, than one which lacks this adornment; while we all know the attraction which a title has on the prospectus of a speculative company. The fact is, a respect for aristocratic associations is so deeply woven into our thoughts and habits, that it has become a second nature to us. This characteristic national feeling has of course its commercial phase. Many scions of noble houses have earned lots of guineas by fees as directors, or still greater remuneration as promoters. It is not too much to say, however, that litigation in the law-courts must almost have put a stop to the business of

the promoter. Coutts's bank may be taken as a conspicuous instance of the alliance between business and nobility. The daughter of the head of the firm, Miss Marjoribanks, was lately married to the Earl of Aberdeen; and one of the partners is Mr. Dudley Ryder, a son of the Earl of Harrowby. At the time of great commercial crises the aristocratic element has been singularly and sadly revealed. Such a crisis was that of the South Sea Bubble Company, in which an immense number of noble families were involved. The same may be said of events of a very recent date—the bubble companies of 1825, the railway year of 1845, and the disastrous financial years of 1857 and 1866. In fact, our noble houses have never felt any repentance or compunction for being concerned in commerce. It was perhaps something different with the old *noblesse* in France. Sterne has a pretty story in his *Sentimental Journey* of a baron or count who, intending to go into business, laid up his sword in the public archives until such time that he should make his fortune in trade and reclaim it. He reclaims it at last, and drops upon it one of those happy tears which Sterne always had at his disposal. At the present day no nobleman would think sword or escutcheon dimmed by contact with gold earned in commerce. Indeed, as the estates of many of our great nobles have developed in value and become connected with industrial pursuits, the nobleman who wishes thoroughly to understand his own possessions must have certain business and commercial qualities. Some nobles spend the best part of their lives in a business office, and work steadily, with a brief interlude for biscuit and sherry, from ten till four. They have to keep ledgers and

day-books; have stewards and secretaries; be bothered with lawyers and architects; and, on the whole, have rather a hard time of it. Some of them like it, and think that life would be very tolerable 'if it were not for its amusements;' but, upon the whole, the incessant contemplation even of one's intense solvency must be monotonous. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

It would be impossible, in the limited space at our disposal, to attempt anything like an exhaustive review of the many families which have obtained their wealth through business, and have since been ennobled by the favour of the sovereign. It is surprising how many there are which owe their position entirely to successful trade. And this, indeed, is the strength of the peerage, this it is which harmonises it with our other institutions—that it is not a distinct caste, but a distinguished body of the people raised from among the others, chosen in the main for intrinsic worth as those whom the king delighteth to honour. It is this which makes it an inseparable part of our social and political systems, and causes it to stand firm and secure amidst the shocks of revolutions, which in other countries have overwhelmed kings and nobles with calamity and ruin. The old *noblesse* of France had nothing like it. The instances are numerous where the foundation of the peerage has been laid by commerce, and the commerce only thrown aside when the dignity was already won, and in some cases has not been thrown aside at all. The most prominent is perhaps that of the Baring family. Francis Baring, a Lutheran minister, came to England about a century ago, and his grandsons established

themselves in business in London. The younger brother, Francis, had the chief management of the concern, and so successful was he that Lord Shelburne, who called him the 'prince of merchants,' recommended him for a baronetcy. Sir Francis left the business to his sons, and it ultimately centred in the second one, Alexander, whose financial influence over the continental cabinets was so potent that the Duc de Richelieu called him one of the 'great powers of Europe,' while at home he received the familiar title of 'Alexander the Great.' While still at the head of his house of business he was created Lord Ashburton, and became famous as the British representative at Washington in 1842, when the treaty was negotiated which bears his name. Nor was this the only title that the family gained; for the third baronet was created Baron Northbrook in 1866, and his son, the late Viceroy of India, has recently been raised to the dignity of an earldom. So that the titles of Ashburton and Northbrook have both been derived directly from the mercantile success of the great house of Barings.

Other similar instances might be mentioned even at the time when the prejudice against associating the peerage with commerce was the strongest. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells us in his *Memoirs*, that 'Throughout his whole reign George III. adopted as a fixed principle that no individual engaged in trade, however ample might be his nominal fortune, should be created a British peer;' yet he mentions that this rule was not without an illustrious exception; for Lord Carington, whose family was brought so prominently before public notice in Buckinghamshire elections, was elevated to the peerage 'when

George III. was king,' and owed the dignity to the mercantile success of his father, a Nottingham banker, who bore the plebeian name of Smith. A facetious friend once wrote on his front-door:

'Bobby Smith lives here;
Billy Pitt made him a peer,
And took the pen from behind his ear.'

The well-known story about the late Lord Tenterden shows the greatness and true nobility of the man, when he pointed out to his son a little shed opposite Canterbury Cathedral, and said: 'Charles, you see this little shop; I have brought you here on purpose to show it you. In that shop your grandfather used to shave for a penny; that is the proudest reflection of my life.' The present Lord Tenterden made a pilgrimage to Canterbury to see the little shop, but found it improved off the face of the earth.

It is in the great industrial development of modern days that our peerage has made its largest commercial gains. With geographical limits inexorably fixed, and without the possibilities of indefinite extension, as in Russia and America, our great landowners will have a lucky tendency to become richer and richer; in Johnsonian phrase, 'potentialities of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice.' Some amongst the most wealthy and illustrious are still engaged in occupations of a very remunerative nature. There is a whole class of noblemen who are traders on the largest scale. Conspicuous amongst them we find the Earl of Dudley, whose coal and limestone mines, besides his extensive ironworks, have been a source of enormous profit. The coal and iron trades have recently passed through great and disastrous variations; but it was only a few years ago that they were

both at the height of prosperity, and, if rumour in the Black Country is to be trusted, Lord Dudley in those days made from them a very considerable revenue. The country of black diamonds ought to be seen by night. By day its chief characteristic is an accumulation of cinder-heaps and innumerable chimneys, from which proceed the blackest and foulest smoke; it is like the place where Satan and his rebellious followers first rested—a ‘dismal situation waste and wild;’ but by night it is far more picturesque, and bears out Milton’s further description of those nether regions, which

‘On all sides round,
As one great furnace, flamed; yet from
those flames
No light, but rather darkness, visible.’

From the tall chimneys the bright flames shoot up into the air, and cast on every surrounding object a strange lurid glare. A very uninviting spot this would seem for the æsthetic development of the toiling masses, so little is there of Nature’s beauty to be found; yet we ought not to forget that Dudley has one quiet retreat, one sequestered spot where Nature is still lovely; for the spacious grounds surrounding the ruined castle, with all their winding paths and secluded avenues, are open to the free use of the grimy colliers. The coal and iron trades have found employment for the capital of other peers, whose names are familiar, amongst which we might mention that of Earl Granville, the courteous leader of her Majesty’s Opposition, who has extensive ironworks near Etruria in Staffordshire, and whose workmen, we understand, have taken a great interest in returning their chosen member for Stoke-on-Trent. There is also Earl Fitzwilliam, whose coal-mines

afford the means of subsistence to so many families in the neighbourhood of Rotherham, near Sheffield. Some time ago he caused all his mines to be closed, on account of a strike which he considered unreasonable, and for a long while he persisted in his refusal to reopen them.

There is one trade which we believe has been more prosperous than ever during the recent period of depression, which is very largely in the hands of a peer of the realm. We refer to the quarrying of slate and the extensive works of Lord Penrhyn, near Bangor. A slate-quarry must be seen to be understood. The whole of the mountain-side is cut into ledges, upon which the observer from below can see only a number of small figures moving about, very much resembling animated dolls. The slate is first loosened by blasting, and is then removed by manual power. So extensive are these works near Bangor that upwards of three thousand men and boys are employed, and a flourishing little town has been formed, called Bethesda, which is dependent solely upon them for support. From Bethesda the slate is taken to Port Penrhyn, about six miles distant, to be shipped to its ultimate destination; and it is estimated that, taking into consideration those who are employed at the port and in transit, Lord Penrhyn, directly and indirectly, furnishes means of subsistence to as many as 10,000 people. The highest praise, we ought to add, is due to Lord Penrhyn for his constant anxiety and solicitude for the moral and material welfare of those who are dependent upon him. Bethesda, in addition to any amount of public-houses, possesses some valuable institutions, such as schools, church, and hospital, for which it is in-

debted to the generosity of the Pennant family, who do not subscribe to the vile heresy of treating their employés as so many hands, but set an example which might well be imitated by large employers of labour.

There is often a great advantage to a town, as well as to the individual nobleman, when the capital of a peer is invested in some great commercial undertaking, or takes the direction of improving and developing the town itself. The Duke of Devonshire, the very model of a business man, has been doing a great work in the two towns, where he is a large land-owner, of Buxton and Eastbourne. Cardiff is a typical instance. It was once an insignificant place, whither coal was brought down on the backs of mules to the tiny wharf of a little creek belonging to the port of Bristol. It was known chiefly to the traveller as a place situated near to the cathedral village of Llandaff. Now the relative importance of the two places is entirely altered; Cardiff is a busy town and thriving port, while Llandaff is its suburb, as Clifton is a suburb to Bristol. The late Marquis of Bute, to whose enterprising spirit the rise of this town is entirely due, possessed, in addition to some 25,000 acres of the Glamorganshire hills, rich with mineral treasures, a large tract of moorland, desolate and bare, in front of the small town of Cardiff. Several schemes were suggested to him for utilising this land, and he at last determined on supplying the town with docks. In this great enterprise the Marquis is popularly reported, as was also said of that great commercial nobleman the Duke of Bridgewater, to have hazarded almost his last penny; but in the issue the docks have been successful

—far more successful than the canals. The present Marquis was only an infant when he came into the title. The trustees carried out all the plans of his father, and Lord Bute, we believe, instead of appropriating the vast income derived from the docks, devotes it to the further expansion of the port. The Marquis is the owner of large fields of that smokeless coal which is now preferred by all the navies of the world. Lord Bute inherits the genius of his family in being an immense builder; and as his house in his Scottish isle has been recently burnt down, he will have a further opportunity for exercising his capacity this way. About one half of the great town of Cardiff belongs to him, of course including the castle, which, reconstructed once, is receiving another reconstruction. The east end, which is practically the 'west end,' of Cardiff belongs to Lord Tredegar, and is called after him Tredegarville. His land adjoins Lord Bute's, and he may possibly have a port to compete with Lord Bute's. A curious point has, however, been raised to the effect that the Crown is the owner of the beach from low-water to high-water mark, and may on occasion assert its rights. Many other instances might be given of the vast commercial interests of the nobility. The great ironworks which are the property of the Duke of Cleveland might be mentioned. The Duke of Westminster is, we believe, greatly engaged in building transactions. He is the landlord of the two Houses of Parliament. Within recent years his Westminster property has been enormously developed, and will soon be entirely covered with sumptuous buildings. The Earl of Derby owns a great part of Liverpool; the Duke of

Norfolk owns a great part of Sheffield; the Earl of Kimberly owns a good deal of Falmouth. Lord Macaulay said, according to Mr. Trevelyan's work, that he would not exchange his position for all the wealth which Lord Dudley had below the ground, or Lord Westminster above it. The town of Brighton affords several illustrations of our subject. The Earl of Chichester has a good deal of property in the east end, but being disappointed in an election he abjured the place, beyond presenting it with a cemetery as a solemn warning. He is now taking his part in the remarkable development of the place. In the west of Brighton there is a large estate, now being rapidly converted into a huge suburb, but which lay fruitless during a long minority. The estate was originally purchased for 40,000*l.*; a small bit of it was sold for 43,000*l.*; and now the building revenue is 40,000*l.* The heiress is of course married to a scion of the nobility.

Something more may be said respecting such a commercial Colossus as the Duke of Westminster. Some reminiscences of the growth of the Grosvenor family are pointed out by Mr. J. C. Hare in his last work, *Walks in London*. Just behind Berkeley-square is Bourdain House, once a little manor-house in the country. Here lived one Mary Davies, a country heiress, who married one Sir Thomas Grosvenor, and the enormous increase in the value of her paternal acres has made the Grosvenor family perhaps the richest in Europe. The neighbouring streets, Farm-street, Hill-street, Hay-hill, Hay-mews, recall 'the old manorial dwelling.' Among the possessions of the Davies family was a certain Ebury Farm in Pimlico. When Buckingham

Palace became Crown property, George III. foresaw that the district would become fashionable, and he wished to purchase Ebury Farm. He had fifty acres of ground with the Palace. These are well-wooded grounds, with a lake of five acres and a pavilion adorned with scenes from *Comus* by MacLise, Eastlake, Dyce, Leslie, Stanfield, and others. In the northern part of these grounds there was once a place of popular entertainment, of which Evelyn says it was 'the only place of refreshment about town for persons of the best quality to be exceedingly cheated at.' Goring House was afterwards built on this site, called Arlington House after its sale to Lord Arlington in the year of the Great Fire. This Lord Arlington was concerned in a memorable act of business. He bought in Holland for sixty shillings the first pound of tea ever introduced into England; and the first cup of tea was probably brewed in what are now the Buckingham Palace gardens. George III. wished to buy the fields at the back of his spacious gardens; but the price was twenty thousand pounds, and Lord Grenville, the Prime Minister, thought it was too much to give. The result was that a little more than a hundred years ago Grosvenor-place was built overlooking the Palace grounds, and to some extent spoiling their seclusion. Behind Grosvenor-place were the 'Five Fields'—marshy ground which, according to the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, had its name as a waiting place of robbers. Several noblemen wished to do a piece of business in buying these fields. Lord Cowper sent an agent to buy them; but the agent came back, in Greek phrase, ἀπραγος. 'Really, my lord,' he said, 'I could not find it in my heart to give two hundred pounds more than they

were worth.' Lord Grosvenor was more astute. He did the best bit of trade known among noble traders. He bought the fields for thirty thousand pounds. Cubitt afterwards offered an annual ground-rent of sixty thousand pounds. We may mention, from Mr. Hare, that the marsh was wrought into a firm basis by earth brought from the excavations of St. Katherine's Docks.

We may take another instance of wealth poured into wealthy families by prosperous commerce. Oxford-street does not derive its name from Oxford, the famous seat of the University of that name—albeit it is the road from Oxford—but from Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford, the lord of the manor of Tyburn. Edward Harley married Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, whence we get Henrietta-street, Holles-street, and Cavendish-square. Later, William Bentinck, Duke of Portland, the names of whose country houses have given us Welbeck-street and Bolsover-street, married Margaret Cavendish Harley, and so joined the Bloomsbury and Marylebone estates; and this junction finds its names in Bentinck-street, Holles-street, Vere-street, Margaret-street, Cavendish-street, Harley-street, Foley-place, Weymouth-street. It is very remarkable how often the fortunes of noble houses have been made or consolidated by lucky marriages. We have heard the lines addressed to the Hapsburgs applied by a Cabinet Minister to a well-known noble house:

'Bella gerant alii: tu, felix Austria,
nube:
Nam quæ Mars aliis dat tibi regna
Venus.'

And unhappily, as the private history of some great houses shows, to bring a vast property within a ring-fence, or to pay off heavy mortgages, January and May have

intermarried, and the transaction has essentially been a commercial one.

Of course we do not find noblemen actually engaged in the personal transaction of business, unless, indeed, in the service of the Crown. But the extent to which they are 'sleeping partners' in 'going concerns' is greater than might be imagined. Two illustrations might be given of this. Take, for instance, the vast shipping interest which our country, with the largest carrying trade in the world, is concerned. Each ship is divided as a rule into sixty-four shares, and the number of shares taken up by men of rank in this unusually profitable kind of investment is immense. Again, look at the Joint-Stock Banks. An immense number of shares, as may be seen by the printed lists, are held by noblemen; and, as in the case of the Overend & Gurney Bank, they have been severely mulcted at times. The greatest business of all in our days is that of money-making, and it makes it none the less because rank is also an element in the matter. In the dining-room of Tortworth Court there is the portrait of the worthy tradesman, one of the good Izaak Walton kind, who made the fortunes of the house of Ducie; and no such honest ancestor should be ignored among the effigies of a house ennobled through commerce.

A very curious chapter might be written on another aspect of our subject. This would be occupied with the cases in which noblemen have voluntarily abandoned their titles and estates, have identified themselves with the proletariat class, and have not only become business men, but working men and labourers. The case of the late Earl of Aberdeen was something of the kind. There

never was a more devout, amiable, lovable man—his character was thoroughly in accordance with the noble stock from which he sprang; yet he became the mate of a mere trading-vessel, and that was his position when he was lost at sea. A still more remarkable case is that of a nobleman who became a working man, lived in a small row of houses, and married a woman of the order in which he enrolled himself. There is the *noblesse* order and the *ouvrière* order, each very good in its way, but totally different. Most workmen would like to be noblemen; but there are also to be met philosophical people who have distinctly preferred the industrial order. Most noblemen, however, who take to business do so from the keen appreciation of the trader's profit, and the desire to secure the advantages that may be derived from the combination of the two systems. Nevertheless there have been noblemen who have shut up their vast houses in town and country, and have gone of set purpose among the industrial classes, and have found their homes and connections among them. Not only is there the far-famed Lord of Burleigh, but we have the romantic stories of a Byron and a Lovelace. We all know the wandering habits of Haroun Alraschid, who loved to wander forth in disguise; and some modern nobles who have played the rôle have found at times that their assertion of their Alraschidship has been disagreeably discredited. But there are noblemen who have effaced themselves, who have found their brides in cottages and behind counters, and who have left a quantity of trouble to their successors, or have left the question of successorship doubtful. The largest instance of the importation of noblemen into

business was at the commencement of the Revolution in the case of the *émigré* nobility of France. On the sudden impoverishment of an ancient and illustrious order men rushed into every avenue of employment, from teaching French and the fiddle to every business where the highest faculties and education might be brought into play. Neither should the ladies be passed over. The *prima donna* of an opera is often a *marchesa*. Among foreign ladies who sometimes condescend to be English governesses you have combined the *comtesse* and the *baronne*. They are often disappointed in the effect of their titles; for English ladies are naturally unwilling to engage as dependents those who would at the same time claim a social superiority.

The phenomenon of trading peers raised legal points of long duration and much complexity. As early as 1747 Lord Chancellor Hardwicke pronounced the dictum so often quoted in the discussion of this question, that 'though there may be some particular powers the Commissioners of Bankruptcy could not exercise against a peer, yet notwithstanding this he may be liable to a commission of bankruptcy if he will trade;' and shortly after an Act of Parliament was passed which removed any doubt that might exist as to the validity of this dictum. In 1849 the bankruptcy law was consolidated in one Act, and by this it was provided 'that if any trader having privilege of Parliament shall commit any act of bankruptcy, he may be dealt with under this Act in like manner as any other trader,' the exception still being made that the debtor was not to be liable to arrest. In 1861 a fresh Act was passed, for the purpose of making all debtors subject to the

bankruptcy laws, whether engaged in trade or not. So stood the law, when in 1869 an application was made to Mr. Commissioner Winslow to declare the Duke of Newcastle bankrupt on the ground that his insolvency rendered him liable under the Act of 1861, though he was not in any way engaged in trade. The Commissioner held that he was not liable under the Act, and an appeal was accordingly made to the Court of Chancery. Here the matter was elaborately argued, his grace being represented by no less able a person than the present Lord Selborne. The court, however, held that the application of the words in dispute must be as extensive as the application of the same words in the statute of 1849. A new Act which came into operation in 1870 set the question at rest by declaring 'that if a person with privilege of Parliament commits an act of bankruptcy he may be dealt with under this Act in like manner as if he had not such privilege.' To this a willing assent had been given by both branches of the legislature, and the liability of a peer to be made a bankrupt was thus fully and finally acknowledged. The prospect that many peers might perhaps be anxious to avail themselves of their newly ascertained privilege seems to have caused some alarm to our hereditary legislators, and in the following year a fresh Act was passed, in which it was declared to be 'necessary for the preservation of the dignity and independence of Parliament that bankrupts should

be disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Lords;' and it was accordingly provided that 'every peer who becomes a bankrupt shall be disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Lords or in any committee thereof; and further, if a peer of Scotland or Ireland, shall be disqualified from being elected to sit and vote in the House of Lords.' The law of the land therefore has fully recognised the status of 'noblemen in business,' and has dealt with it in the spirit of absolute fairness and impartiality.

The application of the law is one of the rarest social phenomena of our days. That noblemen should be engaged in business is an absolute necessity of our time, when commerce extends indefinitely on every side. The peerage form our largest land-owners, and there is not a port, or a railway, or a town whose prosperity is not identified with that of the main owners of the soil. The high honour and straightforwardness of our nobility is itself a guarantee of the highest commercial value. The political value of this blending of classes is very great. It links together different interests and different orders, and imparts much of their solidity to our English institutions. The phenomenon of noblemen in business ought to have the effect, not of bringing the pettiness of detail into the spirit of our nobility, but of bringing the chivalrous spirit of nobility into the operations of commerce.

A SCHOOL BOARD PUZZLE :

Mr. Little Tour with Mr. Whimple.

My somewhat extensive circle of mixed acquaintance includes a worthy individual who is attached to the School Board Commission in the capacity of visitor. He was formerly a lender out of Bath-chairs and a purveyor of asses' milk at the West-end. It was a mistake on his part to abandon those lucrative paths of life to become a 'visitor.' Nature has not fitted him for it. The person best fitted for the post in question is a rigid disciplinarian, with no more bowels of compassion than a mummy, and with no eyes, no ears, no human sense at all but such as guides him to the exact discharge of the stern commands he receives from head-quarters. Unfortunately for my friend the ex-ass-dairyman, he differs as widely from such a man as the flintiest chalk from the mellowest cheese of Cheshire. He is a middle-aged stout man, brimming full of benevolence, and is kindly disposed towards children, especially those of tenderest age, as any matron of the Foundling Hospital. You would never judge this from his appearance, however. He looks sour-visaged and austere enough to sit for the portrait of the ogre who meditated breakfasting on Jack and his seven brothers. I feel convinced that it was the last-mentioned circumstance that stood him in good stead when he applied for an appointment. It was the most disastrous step he ever took in his life. The last time I was in his company he looked so utterly miserable and wretched, that I seriously advised him to resign. But he was inexorable.

'If I did so, sir,' was his reply, 'I should never again know another day's happiness. I would not so much care if it was only the grown-up people who were so cruelly oppressed by the operation of the Compulsory Education Act under which I hold my humble office; it is the knowledge that the little children, the mere babes and sucklings, are made to suffer so severely that sorely afflicts me. Far be it from me to impute blame to any one concerned, least of all those who sit at head-quarters; but it does seem hard that helpless infants should have to pay so heavily towards the reckoning.'

'But,' said I, 'you should bear in mind that the whole community take their share of the burden. Tens of thousands of ratepayers whose children receive no benefit from Board schools are compelled to contribute handsomely towards their erection and maintenance, not to mention the very large number who have no children at all; and since it is that very class of persons with whom you so deeply sympathise who come in for nine-tenths of the prospective, if not present, advantage arising from these excellent institutions, including the babies, it seems to me not unreasonable that they should be called on with the rest to put a helping shoulder to the wheel.'

But Mr. Whimple, the name of the benevolent visitor, shook his head. 'That may be perfectly correct as regards one phase of the question,' he replied, 'but between you and me, sir, it remains to be seen whether education invariably

goes hand-in-hand with virtue, and that to provide for a child's passing the required "standard," will insure his eschewing the objectionable ways of life his father before him led. I am a nice sort of School Board visitor, you will say, to give utterance to such heretical language, but I can't help it. Besides, sir, those who are in a better position to judge are not without doubts similar to those that trouble me. Take the chaplain of Newgate, for instance. In his very last report he made bold to say that from his experience he much questioned whether compulsory education would lessen the number of rogues and rascals. The only difference we should find, according to the opinion of the reverend gentleman mentioned, would be that the rogue of the future would be more keen and clever than the rogue of the past, and consequently the more difficult to deal with. But it is not that view of the matter that strikes me as being the most serious, sir. It is the awful amount of demoralisation that the carrying out of the principles of the Act causes in poor families. It may be all very well to make the matter a subject for a funny picture in *Punch* or the groundwork for a farce for folks to laugh at, but the hard fact remains that amongst the lower orders, where wives as well as husbands are compelled to work to make both ends meet, there is an alarming falling off in paternal affection. The School Board insists on the elder children of a family attending school, and the consequence is that on the mother, whose earnings have hitherto contributed substantially to the replenishing of the cupboard, devolves the sole care of her baby, and she can do nothing else. And the end of it is, sir,' continued Mr. Whimple impressively, 'that

there are short rations at every meal, and that bread that used to be decently buttered is now eaten dry. And not in content, I am sorry to say; the cause of the unwelcome change being constantly present either in its mother's arms or in the cradle. The poor infant, sir, is no longer an object of love in the family. Its mother, of course, will cling to it, but the father hardens his heart against it; and the elder children, who, on its account, are placed on short commons, regard it as a—a sort of young Dragon of Wantley,' said Mr. Whimple, hard driven for a simile, 'and wish that it had never been born. While as for me, sir, and my brother visiting-officers, we are more rudely treated and more detested by the people it is our duty to call on than tax-gatherers or water-rate collectors.'

It was then that I remarked to Mr. Whimple, 'Why don't you resign, since the occupation agrees so ill with you?'

'I will tell you why, sir,' he answered confidentially: 'because of the number of Board visitors at present engaged in the service there are by no means too many of the humane and considerate sort. It is little enough, goodness knows, that I am able to do for the poor things. As you say, sir, the occupation does *not* agree with me, and I am not sure that it is honest of me to continue it, holding the opinions I do; but I can't bear the thought of resigning, and there being a *real* griffin instead of a *make-believe* one appointed in my stead. I should like you or any other impartial person to accompany me one day on my round, and witness the kind of treatment to which even I, with all the goodwill I bear them, am treated.'

I took Mr. Whimple at his word, and within a week was his companion on a 'visiting' expedition.

For obvious reasons I may not mention the particular district which includes the beat assigned to Mr. Whimple, but for the sake of Board visitors generally I hope there are others less trying to a man's patience and good-nature. My friend was provided with a list of about thirty defaulters, on whom it was his duty to call to inform them that unless they straightway sent the little absentees to school, or gave him a good reason for their continued truancy, he should be compelled to summon them before a magistrate. Nothing particular marked the first half dozen calls; but when Mr. Whimple came to the seventh on the list, he intimated that now probably I should see an example of the difficulties he had occasionally to contend against. Approaching a door which stood open, and was without a knocker, he rapped at it with the knob of his walking-stick.

'I wish to see Mrs. Walkinshaw,' he politely remarked to a little girl who presently made her appearance.

The lady herself, however, was within ear-shot.

'Lord bless us, do you now!' (this in a shrewish voice and with withering sarcasm.) 'And why didn't you send a telegraph to say you was coming, or a outrider on horseback?' (At this point Mrs. Walkinshaw appeared at the head of the kitchen stairs, drying soap-suds from her arms with her apron.) 'O, I see, you comes in pairs now, do you? as though one of you wasn't enough. But I ain't afraid of the old kit of you. *Now* what do you want?'

She was a woman remarkable for bone and muscle, and wore her red hair tied in a hard knot at the back of her head. She came up the passage with a military stride, and brought herself within half

a yard of my companion with a stamp. He took a step backward in some alarm, but, as I was glad to see, put a bold face on the matter.

'Tut-tut! You ought to know by this time, Mrs. Walkinshaw, the effect this kind of nonsense has on me. I have called respecting your children.'

'What about 'em?' returned Mrs. Walkinshaw defiantly.

'They were absent from school the whole of last week.'

'Ho, indeed!'

'Yes; and the week before as well. Now, my good lady, you know that this won't do. Why *do* you persist in disobeying the law?'

Mrs. Walkinshaw's demeanour suddenly underwent a complete change. With mock humility she folded her arms on her bony bosom, and begged that the gentleman—if he *was* a gentleman—would be so kind as to 'speechify' which of her children he was so condescending as to allude to; 'because—hem!—unfortunately I've got a many of 'em,' said she, dropping a curtsy.

'Well, there's Louisa, aged nine, and there's—'

'One at a time, if *you* please, sir, *my* children not being cattle in a medder. You spoke of my daughter Louisa, if I don't mistake?'

'Yes.'

'Louisa,' returned Mrs. Walkinshaw, with dignity, 'has a habcess under her arm, if the School Board has no objections.'

'It was ringworm last time, if I rightly remember,' remarked the visitor, in a tone that mildly denoted doubt. 'Where is she?'

'She's gone out for a hairing.'

'For a herring?' asked Mr. Whimple, who was slightly hard of hearing.

'Thank you for the correction, sir, but a hairing I said, and a hairing I mean.'

'Well, well; and what about Jane, aged twelve?'

'Jane, haged twelve, is at the present moment down-stairs in the washus.'

'Well, she ought to be at school, you know that very well. Why don't you send her?'

'Jane, haged twelve,' repeated Mrs. Walkinshaw, not heeding the visitor's last observation, 'is nussing the baby—'

'But you are perfectly well aware—'

'Which is full out in measles.'

And she smiled sweetly, and dropped him another curtsy.

'That of course alters the case. You must keep Jane at home.'

'It is my intention to send her to school this afternoon, summonsings not being required.'

'That you must not do,' exclaimed Mr. Whimple, in alarm. 'Good heavens! how can you think of such a wicked thing?'

It was evident to me that Mrs. Walkinshaw had carried her point.

'Very good, sir; since you say it, I'll keep Jane at home,' she replied, with an unmistakable twinkle of triumph in her eyes.

'What do you think of that?' he asked me, as we came away from the house.

'It would not very much surprise me if you have been imposed on,' I replied.

'I am afraid so too, I am very much afraid so,' rejoined the soft-hearted visitor, pausing and looking back towards Mrs. Walkinshaw's residence, as though of a good mind to return and renew the attack; 'but what the deuce is a fellow to do? That poor woman to my knowledge has eight youngsters to keep by her hard earnings at the wash-tub; she is a widow, and Jane, aged twelve, is her right hand in a manner of speaking. I hope the

woman has spoken the truth, that's all. No, I don't,' he continued, hurriedly correcting himself; 'if the baby has got measles they'll all catch it, and there'll be a pretty thing for the poor soul. It is all through the baby, sir. But how can a man possessed of a spark of feeling act harshly towards a fatherless creature without a tooth in its head?'

A short time afterwards we made a call on a female less formidable to face, perhaps, than the vixenish mother of Louisa and Jane, but on the whole an even more difficult subject to treat with in the case of a man of Mr. Whimple's tender susceptibilities. She was a poorly clad, pale woman, and she opened the door to us with a baby in her arms, and three other little ones clinging to her skirts.

'I am sorry to have to trouble you again, Mrs. Winnick,' said Mr. Whimple, giving the baby a propitiatory pat on the cheek with his pencil, 'but your daughter Emily was again absent from school last week.'

'Sir,' responded Mrs. Winnick, with a sad smile, 'I am aware of it, but you shall not have occasion to complain again.'

'Come, that's better,' exclaimed the visitor, brightening up; 'matters are mending with you, eh? Your husband has got better and gone to work again?'

'My husband, sir,' returned Mrs. Winnick, with the meek resignation of a Christian martyr, 'is, of the two, a little worse than he was when you called last time. Another place is broke out in his leg; and the doctor says he will never get well without he has proper nourishment, which of course is out of the question. You know that, sir, and the reason why.'

Poor Mr. Whimple looked ter-

ribly distressed, and shook his head in feeble protest against the last insinuation.

'I am sorry that I was mistaken, ma'am. I made sure, from your cheerful manner, that Emily was going regularly to school again.'

'And so she shall go regular,' returned Mrs. Winnick firmly, but at the same time drying her eyes on the baby's bedgown; 'if she has, which is most likely, to follow her father to his grave, I give you my word she shall only be absent for a half-day. I have made up my mind, sir, since it is your wish and desire, Emily shall go to school, and we will take the consequences, be what they may.'

'As far as I am concerned, Mrs. Winnick, as you are aware, I am always willing to do the best I can for you. But beyond a certain point I am powerless, and must do my duty, however painful I may find it.'

'Quite so, sir,' returned Mrs. Winnick, regarding the unfortunate visitor more in sorrow than in anger; 'as you say, sir, since you have lent yourself as a weapon of oppression in the hands of those who are so hard on us, so be it. Having at your wish and desire to send my girl Emily to school, I must nurse my baby myself. Having to nurse my baby myself, I can do no work. Doing no work, we must all starve.' And then in a tremulous voice, and with a hand on Mr. Whimple's arm, she added, 'Heaven forbid, sir, that you may hereafter be looked on in the same light as you look on yourself, and that you may not be held responsible. We bear you no animosity, sir, and hope that in your last moments you may not be disturbed by any thought of us.'

And by this time, weeping copiously, she bade us good-day, and showed us out.

Despite his expressed determination to the contrary, poor Mr. Whimple was so deeply affected by this interview, that I almost think had I not been with him to cheer him up a bit, that he would on the spot have borrowed pen, ink, and paper of Mrs. Winnick, and written and sent in his resignation to the Board there and then. He did the best he could under the painful circumstances, however. Designedly—he declared it was accidental—he left his gloves behind him, and made one of the children a present of half-a-crown when it came running after him with them. I could not but remark that Mr. Whimple had no heart of tenderness for boys; indeed, he seemed to compromise with his conscience, which no doubt reproached him, for his unofficial consideration for little girls and babies, by comporting himself with harshness that bordered on ferocity towards every 'under thirteen' young ragamuffin at large he happened to encounter. He delighted to come on them unaware when they were absorbed in games at marbles or pitch a nicker, and slipping his book and pencil into his pocket, and his walking-stick under his arm, would 'collar' a brace of them at once, and shake out of them a statement (not always a veracious one, I am afraid) of where they lived and what their age was. One reckless Arab of ten, relying too confidently on his stoutness, had the audacity to defy him with his fingers to his nose, adding greatly to the exasperation by a jeering reminder to Mr. Whimple of the peculiar nature of the dairy business in which he formerly was engaged. To the young reprobate's consternation, the visitor gave speedy chase, and the former only escaped by leaving his cap and one of his braces in Mr.

Whimple's hands, that gentleman having grimly informed him of his private address, where, on personal application, he could recover the impounded articles. At every fresh foray the persecuted visitor declared that 'these confounded boys' were the one plague of his existence; but I rather think that he got on better with than without them. Indeed, I could not but remark that, whenever an unusually affecting visiting case depressed his spirits, he invariably fell back on a skirmish with his young male friends by way of reviver, and always with a satisfactory result.

In the course of our day's experience, however, the case which occasioned Mr. Whimple most perturbation was that of a whole family, the domestic peace and prosperity of which had, as he averred, suffered complete wreck through an innocent babe some few months old; and who, from being the cherished cherub of the household, the delight of its fond parents, and an object of adoration to its brothers and sisters, had, under the hateful influence of the School Board, come to be regarded as a bogey and a bugbear. I have reasons for supposing that Mr. Whimple purposely made this his last call, because he felt that circumstances might arise out of it which would unman him, and make him unfit to perform any more duty that day.

'Unless matters have altered, sir,' said he to me, 'which I have very little hopes of, we shall find here an example which exactly illustrates the possible extent of the mischief that may crop out of this compulsory business. Of course, sir, the fact must not be forgotten that weak-minded as well as strong-minded persons—like Mrs. Walkinshaw, for instance—come within the scope of its

working. This of the Larrapers is a weak-minded case, I am afraid.'

'The Larrapers are old offenders, I suppose?'

'They—at least the father has been taken before the magistrate and fined on both occasions,' replied Mr. Whimple, as we paused at the dilapidated threshold of the Larraper dwelling. 'The husband I believe to be a not particularly nice kind of man; indeed, on one occasion not only did he abuse me, but threatened me with personal violence, and therefore I had much less compunction in summoning him. But there's his family, sir—quite a houseful, as one may say, of poor little creatures; and a baby in arms—a bright little chap, who knows me as well as possible, he has seen me so often. Well, sir, on both the occasions mentioned I paid the fine and costs privately out of my own pocket. I blame myself afterwards for these weaknesses, for really I cannot afford to do such things out of the very moderate salary I am allowed. Larraper, you must know, is a house-painter, and— Good gracious, this is he coming down the street! I was in hope that he would not be at home. However, I am determined to be severe with him this time.'

And as the defaulting house-painter—a dirty and dissipated individual, and evidently far gone in liquor—approached, the visitor assumed his most ferocious expression of countenance.

'Mr. Larraper,' began my friend sternly; but the intoxicated house-painter cut him short.

'Don't apologise, sir,' said he; 'it is your duty, and you must perform it. I've been expectin' it. It's a month hard labour, I s'pose. I'll—hic!—I'll do it, sir, like a man. And when the blessed Board has drove my wife into

the mad'us as well, I hope its revengeful nature will be satisfied. Don't stand on ceremony with me, Mr. Detective,' he continued, addressing himself to me, at the same time holding out his hands; 'slip on the handcuffs, if you've got 'em about you, and I'll go quiet.'

'Larraper!' remarked Mr. Visitor, 'you are drunk! Don't stand there talking like a fool, and wasting my valuable time. Let us see your wife.'

The street-door was opened, and the man, with difficulty leading the way by holding on to the banisters, showed us to a front room on the second floor. The place was almost bare of furniture, and occupied by a miserable-looking woman with a child at her breast and by four other little children. Mr. Visitor, instead of proceeding at once to the business that had brought him there, looked round the room with a dismay it was beyond his power to disguise, and presently exclaimed,

'Gracious me, why, where's the table that stood in the middle? where's the chimney-glass?'

The drunken painter, who had sunk down on to a chair, here rose to his feet.

'Where are they?' he cried huskily, at the same time pointing the finger of hatred towards the unconscious suckling in its mother's arms; 'ask that young dewourer, ask that rapacious little house-leek' (horse-leech I think he must have meant), 'what has come of 'em!'

'Larraper has sold 'em for drink,' said the woman, with dull indifference.

'And who drove me to it?' exclaimed the brute; 'who brought the sorrier on me that I'm glad to drown at any price? Wasn't it the brat and the thundering School Board con-spiring together that

done it? Ain't it,' continued Mr. Larraper, taking a very dirty cotton handkerchief from his pocket and applying it to his eyes,—'ain't it enough to make a man go and shove his head in a pail when he finds his own offspring driving him to make a beast of himself?'

'But how can that poor baby drive you to anything of the kind?' I asked.

'How? He asks how, Martha!' returned Mr. Larraper, turning to his wife, and laughing a drunken laugh of derision. 'How? Why, wasn't it through that hateful little wretch—' ('O, don't, don't, Charley dear; anything but call it that, you that used to be so fond of it!') this from Mrs. Larraper, now in tears). 'I say and repeat, wasn't it through that hateful little wretch that you lost Mr. Solomons' westkit work? Wasn't it as good as nine shillings a week to us when you was allowed to keep our eldest gal at home to nuss her? and didn't Mr. Solomons himself, after three warnings, stop the work because of the many westkits you spilte through being obliged to embroider 'em with that young cuss in your arms? Don't check me, Martha, in calling it so. Is it *my* fault that my nat'ral feelin's as a father are perwerted and my 'art turned against my own flesh and blood? Where's the table that stood in the middle, indeed!' continued Mr. Larraper, with a threatening shake of his head; 'it will soon be where's the baby that was chucked out o' winder, if they go on goading me.'

At this dark threat, led by Mrs. Larraper, who hugged her baby so tightly that it squealed too, the whole family broke into loud lamentations, while poor soft-headed, kind-hearted Mr. Visitor was fain to hasten to and look out at the window to hide his emotion.

'But you always drank, you know, Mr. Larraper; you won't pretend to deny that,' he said at length.

'But never so hard till he had this preying on his mind,' exclaimed his wife; 'it's a awful law, gentlemen, that sets a father against his own child. How *can* he love it when—bless its poor little heart!—it is taking the bread out of our mouths? It's real hard that a dear baby should be turned into a millstone round our necks instead of a comfort and a blessing.'

I am not sure that she designed it, but if she had she could not more successfully have hit Mr. Visitor on his tenderest point. He could stand it no longer, and after a hurried whisper with Mrs. Larraper, accompanied by a sound curiously like the chinking of silver, we took our departure.

I cannot say that I was at all favourably impressed with Mr. Whimple's fitness for his office; indeed, I have no hesitation in saying that the harvest of good the seeds of which the legislature are so indefatigably sowing would be lamentably retarded were all Board visitors like the chicken-hearted gentleman in question. But at the same time I am bound to acknowledge that my day's observations—apart from the Larrapers and the Walkinshaws—left me with the impression that 'the baby's' shoulders were scarcely broad enough for the burden it was fated to bear, and that it would be an excellent thing if some remedy could be devised for the manifest injustice it is at present enduring.

À LA WATTEAU.

THE pretty coquettish-looking brunette, who has dressed herself—or been arrayed by the artist—in the Watteau costume, we may suppose for some fancy-ball or seasonable festivity, may be left to make her own impress and win her full quiver of admirers. She is a very charming young lady, and needs no word of ours to herald her praises. Of the artist it will be enough to say that he has given us a very attractive drawing, *à la Watteau*, as its title intimates, but not a servile or even a very close imitation of the painter of Valenciennes. Rather it is, as imitations ought to be, a free adaptation of the quaint Louis XIV. style to contemporary tastes and modes of thought. Watteau's ladies are always and unmistakably French; Mr. Hennessy's damsel is as unmistakably English. Not alone are form and features English, but the costume plainly came from an English costumier. Still, both aspect and treatment are *à la Watteau*, and that suffices for our theme.

In these days of faded and feeble artistic inanities representative of social scenes and subjects, it is refreshing to see a young artist turn aside from the beaten paths to seek inspiration in fresh fields or the study of an almost forgotten 'old master.' Antoine Watteau's was once a name to conjure with, but for long has been almost ignored in the art-world. Yet, in looking at one and another recent soulless revival, we have wondered whether Watteau's turn would never come round. His would, we admit, be

a difficult style to resuscitate in its neatness, daintiness, and precision of handling, grace, vivacity, and piquancy of form and sentiment. But it is very much the mode now to paint scenes of social life, and is likely to become still more so; the festivities of the upper as well as the virtues of the middle and the griefs of the lower strata of society figure in every exhibition; and for the first, at least, no better model than Watteau could well be chosen. Stothard, in the last generation, kept Watteau in his mind when painting his scenes from the garden of Boccaccio, but he was of too serious a turn to succeed in imitating the brilliant Frenchman. His women were as graceful, but it was the grace of ancient Greece rather than of modern France or mediæval Italy, and he lacked altogether the gaiety and glitter of his model. His ladies and their gallants took their pleasures sadly.

Watteau was, in truth, one of those men of original genius who make the style by which they are known. Of Flemish origin, though born at Valenciennes, he grafted the French vivacity upon his native stock. Grave, reserved, and taciturn in manner, and subject to frequent fits of depression, his pencil was always employed on festive themes, when he had not to yield to the commands of his employers. The names of his early masters are given, but they are only names. From them he learned little more than the mechanism of his art. But that is all the true man needs. When he has learned that, he may be

trusted to acquire for himself all that lies beyond and is within his reach.

Like all ambitious Frenchmen Watteau's first thought, when he became his own master, was to proceed to Paris. Moneyless, he had to seek employment, and he found it at first with a picture manufacturer—for picture manufacturers were no more unknown then than now—who kept his journeymen occupied in producing imitations of the Old Masters or devotional pieces for village churches and private oratories, as one or the other were most in demand. As soon as he could, Watteau escaped from this drudgery, and for a while worked under Claude Gillot, who was engaged in painting scenery for the opera and designing costumes for the ballet. The ballet then was as unlike the ballet of the present day as was the scenery of the Comédie Italienne to the scenery of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. The ballet was an elegant pastoral, the scenery neat and elegant to match. It was in watching these graceful idylls of the theatre that Watteau, we need not doubt, insensibly acquired his taste for refined pastoral subjects and his style of representing them.

How long he continued in Gillot's *atelier* is uncertain. But whilst there he was preparing himself for original work. He loved, we are told, to stroll about the places of holiday resort, and sketch unobserved any persons or habits that caught his fancy. Especially he used to watch and sketch the mock doctors, who, dressed in fanciful robes and mounted on a platform, rehearsed with extravagant gestures and bombastic phrases the wonderful cures their pills or draughts had wrought. Itinerant musicians, mendicants, and market-folk, and

all sorts of unusual or picturesque characters, found a place in his note-book. It may be he was at this time contemplating the producing French counterparts to the Dutch and Flemish kermes, which the Ostades and Teniers had rendered so popular, or possibly he was only working in that vein of grotesque and caricature in which he about this time indulged, but which happily he soon cast aside. Some of his studies in the Grosvenor Gallery show that he did not confine his pencil to these subjects. Among them are drawings of a Savoyard boy, of a young man in festal costume holding across his shoulders a staff, around which vine-leaves are entwined, and of an old beggar-woman; but there are also careful studies of youthful female heads, and of ladies, seated and standing, in evening dress. They are made in red and black chalk, admirably drawn, and very delicately and carefully finished—studies in every sense of the word.

Some original efforts displeased M. Gillot, and Watteau had to leave his *atelier*. Not yet, however, was he strong enough or rich enough to stand alone, and he had to seek a new master. He found one in Claude Audran, to whom his talent for the grotesque made him a valuable assistant. Working in Audran's *atelier* would have helped Watteau little, but Audran was a man of attainments and ability, and, what was of more service to Watteau, he was court-painter and keeper of the Luxembourg, to which he gave his assistant free access.

This was the turning-point in Watteau's career. He saw something of court-life, and at the Luxembourg studied Rubens' wondrous series of Medici paintings, and found in them what seemed to him a revelation in composition



and colour. Henceforth Rubens was the teacher to whom he looked with unbounded reverence. Critics observing the wide difference, not only in the size, but in the subject, treatment, and general character of their works, have questioned, naturally enough, the statement that it was from Rubens that Watteau derived his style. But the statement is that of the earliest authorities; and though it is quite true that no direct imitation is traceable, any one familiar with the works of the two masters will understand how the younger may have ascribed his style to the inspiration of the elder—not by imitation, indeed, but by assimilation. Watteau had his own ideal of form, acquired long before he studied Rubens' pictures. He had, no doubt, also settled his method of painting. And drawing and handling are not often altogether changed by a painter who has reached years of maturity, however much he may, through some new influence, alter or modify his general style. But the influence of Rubens may be seen in Watteau's scheme of colour, in the broken folds and tints of his draperies, in the drawing, touch, and tone of his landscapes, and especially in the treatment of his foliage.

Familiarity with the works of the great masters in the royal collections set him longing—as what painter has not at some time longed?—to go to Italy. To this end he entered into the competition at the Academy. The subject of the prize was the meeting of David and Abigail, and Watteau's picture obtained only the second place. All hope of Italy vanished. Dispirited, he resolved to return to his birthplace. To obtain the necessary funds he painted a picture of 'Troops departing,' which he sold for some

fifty shillings, and set out for Valenciennes. But Valenciennes was very dull after Paris, and the purchaser of his picture was so delighted with it that he offered eight or ten pounds for a companion to it. Watteau, now six or eight-and-twenty, set to work vigorously. His festive scenes became exceedingly popular; he was admitted into the Academy, and sailed along on the full tide of prosperity.

But not, as would seem, of happiness. His restlessness and waywardness of disposition grew upon him; he alternately sought and shunned society, and depression of spirits became habitual. Observers called him morose, but the sinking of heart was due to physical causes. Consumption was slowly developing itself. When it became evident what was the disease, it had proceeded too far to be arrested. Our Richard Mead, physician to George I., then enjoyed the widest fame in such cases; and late in the autumn of 1720, Watteau came to London for the benefit of his advice. Mead was a great lover and collector of works of art as well as a skilful physician. He received the painter with open arms, insisted on his staying in his house, offered him commissions, and introduced him to the king and court. But the winter set in damp and cold, and the longing for Paris became irresistible. Thither he returned accordingly at the beginning of February 1721. Soon he desired a further change; and moving from place to place, he lingered till July, when he quietly passed away, having not yet completed his thirty-seventh year, and wanting those few months of the years to which Raffaele lived.

Looking to the circumstances of his life and his early death, we may rather wonder that he painted

so many pictures than that his pictures are so seldom seen. Considering his eminence—and from the first his countrymen have been unwavering in their admiration—it is remarkable that so few of his paintings are in the public collections. The Louvre, where we might have expected to find the best illustrations of his style, has only one picture by him, and that is little more than a sketch, and by no means characteristic of his manner. Our National Gallery has not a single example. In the Dulwich Gallery there are, however, two pictures by him, both *fêtes*, and one of them very fine. The private collections are richer in examples. Sir Richard Wallace has an exceedingly fine specimen; and there are, or were, some very good ones in Lord Overstone's, Mr. Morrison's, and several other collections. Nearly all of these are entitled '*Fêtes Champêtres*,' but this is not their proper designation. Watteau's are scenes of high and mostly of court life. The *fêtes* are held by high-born lords and ladies in trim and stately gardens. There is nothing rustic about them. When Watteau was received into the Academy in 1717, he was entered on the register as

'Painter of *Fêtes Galantes*.' This is exactly what his *fêtes* are, and so they ought to be described.

Altogether there must be a good many of Watteau's pictures in England, but to the general public the painter is almost unknown except by reputation. Even at the exhibitions of the Old Masters at the Royal Academy it is some years since there has been a genuine Watteau shown. It would be a good deed if the Academy would secure a few authentic examples for their next Winter Exhibition. The opportunity of a leisurely study of his works would be of real benefit to the younger painters of social life. And the general public would find equal pleasure in the examination. For to the solidity of manner, both technical and mental, of the earlier Dutch and Flemish masters, Watteau added a richness and raciness of style, a freshness, gaiety, grace, and elegance altogether French—and it must be said altogether conventional—which in the *ensemble* is exceedingly piquant, *spirituel*, and charming. They have, too, an historic value. The 'joyous life' of the court and courtiers of Louis XIV. is nowhere else so happily shown.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The Guardsman.

It is my custom of an afternoon to enter the palatial halls of the Caravanserai, and to salt my buttered toast and drink my antepandial cup of tea whilst poring over the evening editions of the newspapers. I must confess to being partial to that social but somewhat indigestible institution, five-o'clock tea, and dawdle over the mild refection with all the love and languor of those who sipped bohea in the days of good Queen Anne. As a rule, scarcely am I seated in my roomy arm-chair, with the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Globe*, and the *Evening Standard* clutched in my selfish grasp, than Dolly Clavering, unless his arduous military duties interfere with his movements, comes in and sits down beside me. He, too, is fond of tea, and his tastes are considerably encouraged in that direction by a bevy of as fair sisters as ever brother declined to escort shopping. Dolly and I are excellent friends—'pals' is the expression he uses; and he is good enough to say that 'he has a regard, don't you know, for the old sportsman,' alluding to myself; though why I am a 'sportsman,' unless that in Dolly's phraseology everybody is a *sportsman*, is beyond me. Some of Dolly's friends call me an 'old fogey,' and if I am not to be designated by my rightful name, of the two I prefer to be termed an 'old sportsman.' There is a savour of manliness in the one which is not objectionable, but of womanliness in the other which is hardly flattering.

Dolly is a mere lad of one-and-twenty; and his bright, fresh, youthful face, with its nascent

whiskers and moustache, the latter fondly caressed, the Clavering rather beaky nose, and his sisters' eyes, are as pleasant for a tired London man to look upon as are the snows of the Alps after the sands of the desert. A great buck is Dolly. His frock-coat fits his tall slender figure without a wrinkle; his trousers never break out into ugly folds at the knees; his boots are lacquered like polished ebony; his hat is new without being glossy; and there is a swagger, partly from diffidence, partly from hauteur, in his gait and greeting, which is seldom disagreeable in a very young man. Careful as is Dolly with respect to his attire, you could never mistake him for a dressy stockbroker or City swell; everything about him is quiet, sober, and unpretentious. Apart from liking young Clavering, and knowing something of his people, I regard Dolly with a peculiar and special interest. He is a Guardsman, and has the honour to hold a commission in that favourite regiment the Bombardiers. More than once have I solaced his solitude, when on guard at the Bank, by being his guest; nor is my presence entirely unknown at the hospitable dining-table at St. James's Palace or at the mess at the Tower. Again let me say that Dolly is in the Guards.

I repeat the statement, for it appears to me that some curious delusions exist in the public mind as to the Guardsman of the period. He is the prize favourite of the novelists, and it must be confessed that *messieurs les romanciers* make him out to be a most won-

derful personage. Only last night I read *Bearskin and Boudoir* by that favourite author of military fiction the fashionable Browne—Browne, if you please, with the final *e*. All the heroes of Browne's works are soldiers, and it is needless for me to add, when a man boasts of an aristocratic *e* to a plebeian cognomen, that all his soldiers are Guardsmen, officers either in the Household Cavalry or in the Foot Guards. When I read of the doughty deeds of Dormer de Bohun Cholmondeley Fitzhardinge (Browne likes a good name for his hero), and think of Dolly, who is rather shy in ladies' society, and who prefers to go through a gate than over one when out with the hounds, the contrast is amusing.

Of course you know this Fitzhardinge! What reader of fiction (and I own to being a most omnivorous novel-reader myself) is not acquainted with him? Are we not all familiar with his haughty commanding figure, his perfect features, those dark terrible eyes always being lit up with desire or revenge, or else hard and cold as sheeted steel, the heavy moustache falling over the stern cruel mouth, the exquisitely modelled hands white as a beauty's, the arched instep, and the Arabian feet? And then the views of this splendid creature upon modern society! How fierce is the cynicism underlying all his opinions and judgments! When I listen to Browne's heroes inveighing against the falsity of woman, and dealing out mordant strokes against the shams and hypocrisies of life in the club smoking-room, or in the *tabagie* of one of those ancient country mansions for which the pen of our author is noted, I compare him with Dolly, who can be seen any Sunday morning during the season with his mother and

sisters in the family-pew at St. Peter's, Eaton-square, who is passionately fond of dancing, who is devoted to amateur theatricals, who loses what he is pleased to call his heart about half a dozen times a week, and who colours furiously when a woman snubs him (which is not often, for he is too shy and too much of a gentleman to be forward); and the contrast is striking.

What an ordinary man is Dolly Clavering, and what a brilliant creature is our Fitzhardinge! When Dolly goes to ball or dance he is quite in a flutter of excitement if a reigning beauty will allow him to write his name down on her card, or if some high dame of fashion asks for his escort to Hurlingham or the Orleans Club. Whereas Fitzhardinge creates such havoc amid the duchesses and countesses, scattered liberally throughout Browne's volumes, as to exhibit a most lamentable state of things in the English peerage. Haughty ladies, whose blood is so blue that it is surprising it condescends to flow at all, sigh for him; the greatest heiresses languish after his smiles; disappointment, rejection, refusal, are words never to be met with in his social dictionary. Dolly is not a bad man across country when his blood is up; but, as I have said, he regards jumping, unless when necessary, as a work of supererogation; he is a fair shot, and can knock over his pigeons at Hurlingham or the Gun Club as well as the generality of his fellows; nor is his performance despicable in the stubble and turnip-fields, or in the coverts of the paternal woods. But Fitzhardinge! He rides horses that none but he can ride; he never hunts but he is glued to the hounds from find to finish; whilst the gates, fences, brooks, doubles, and every mortal

thing he takes with such consummate ease, always make the whole field tremble with fear. He eschews—dauntless and magnificent creature that he is!—ordinary sport—partridges, pheasants, grouse, and the like—and is only keen after big game. The tigers he shoots on foot; the wild buffaloes his unerring aim brings down; the lions, leopards, pumas, the whole Zoological Gardens, in fact, that fall to his wonderful breech-loader, are they not written in the pages of the voracious Browne?

Unless when Dolly is on guard or engaged by society, he dines modestly at his club for some four or five shillings; then, while digestion is pleasantly waiting upon appetite, he pays a visit to the smoking-room and falls asleep over a novel; perhaps, when slumber has refreshed him, he goes upstairs and takes a hand at whist, playing the club points till it is time for him to go to his bachelor lodgings in Jermyn-street and turn into bed. We know how Fitzhardinge, on the contrary, passes his time. What princely dinners he orders! what an educated *gourmet* he is! How deep are his potations, without ever affecting the clearness of his brain, the steadiness of his hand, or the basilisk coldness of his extraordinary eyes! How he gambles at *écarté*, *napoleon*, or *baccarat*, winning or losing thousands without ruffling the composure of that sphinx-like face or disturbing the serenity of that marble brow! How he has to listen from charming female lips of the misery his coldness, his indifference, or his neglect has caused in their too susceptible hearts! When I read of Fitzhardinge—of his prowess, his Rochefoucauld maxims, his pampered tastes, his gorgeous attire, his innumerable conquests, and his Munchausen sporting adven-

tures—it is a source of congratulation to me that I have never had the pleasure of seeing him amongst his comrades in the Household troops; for with all due deference to Browne, it seems to me that Fitzhardinge is a hard vicious brute, and far more like a flash groom who has been educated in the music-halls of the period, than one of those we are accustomed to look upon as 'an officer and a gentleman.' If certain of our novelists hold the mirror up to Nature, well may society talk about the degeneracy of the British army. For my part, I do not believe in the accuracy of these descriptions—of what use is imagination unless you draw upon it?—and in refutation of such views and theories let me sketch the career of Dolly Clavering.

The eldest son of an old Devonshire squire and heir to some six thousand a year, Dolly, after a brief education at Eton, where he distinguished himself as one of the smartest 'fields' in the eleven, was gazetted to the Bombardiers. In these days of equality and open competition many of the privileges of the Guards have been docked; still a commission in one of the regiments in the Household troops will always be an object of envy to most young men. Quartered in London, save when at Windsor or Shorncliffe, the Guardsman has every advantage that town life can offer, and can enjoy to the full all the charms and fascinations of good society. Unlike his less fortunate brother in the Line, he knows nothing of dull provincial towns, with their barrack monotones, garrison hacks, fifth-rate theatres, and indifferent amusements. He is exempt from foreign service; but in the hour of danger, and when the conflict is deepening around him, it is his

special privilege to be in the front of battle. The uniform he wears is in my opinion the most becoming in the service. There are ladies who so admire the gauntlets, helmets, and cuirasses of the Life Guards and the Blues, and the gorgeous blue-and-gold of the Horse Artillery, that they vow no dress in the British army equals them. But with all due deference to the opinion of the fairsex—and in matters of costume their judgment is not to be decried—when Dolly is adorned in his bearskin and well-fitting scarlet tunic, no soldier, it seems to me, can wear a more becoming uniform, or one which more unites grace with quiet splendour.

If we are to credit our novelists, the young Guardsman is always the handsomest of his sex, enjoys a most lavish allowance, dwells in sumptuous chambers in St. James's-street, runs through a couple of fortunes before he has been five years on the town, disappoints his tradesmen, and then retires to some West India regiment or takes service under a half-savage potentate till the friendly heiress, who seems ever to be hovering over the colours of 'the Household,' takes pity upon him, and makes him once more a man and a millionaire. Dolly is certainly very good-looking, but for that advantage he is more indebted to his father and mother than to the Guards. The old Squire gives his son a decent allowance, which enables him to pay his wine-merchant and his tailor, to keep a horse which he both rides and drives, and to have comfortable rooms on the second floor of a house in Jermyn-street. The paternal mansion is in Prince's-gardens, but Dolly thinks it incumbent upon himself to live in apartments near his two clubs. He is known as a good son and a

kind brother, and his people have little cause to complain of his desertion. Whenever he wants a dinner he has only to let his mother know that he will make one of the family party at eight o'clock for the cook to show all her cunning and the Squire to have up some of that 'Mouton' claret which has moistened the throats of the Claverings for well-nigh a generation. Having four charming sisters we need hardly say that Dolly finds no difficulty in obtaining the company of one or two men in his regiment on these occasions.

I have said that my young friend's allowance is good, but it is not exorbitant. Dolly has, however, one pull over his brother linesman—he is saved from many of the expenses which ordinarily attend an officer's life. Except when at the Tower or at Windsor or Shorncliffe he has no mess-bills to pay, nor is he called upon for incessant contributions; hence his income goes farther than it otherwise might. If Dolly draws five hundred a year from the kindly old man he calls 'the governor,' it is about as much as he does; and if a man does not gamble and is not the slave of any vicious tastes, five hundred a year when *spent rigidly upon oneself* will cover a fair expenditure. At all events Dolly does not live uncomfortably, he never seems to lack funds to dine his friends at the Caravanserai, to run over to Paris, to put in an appearance on first nights at the theatres, or to indulge in the various other forms of social distraction which require ready money. Nor should he; for I, *moi qui parle*, had a relative—the clock he took from the Frenchman at Waterloo ticks before me as I write—who managed to live in the Guards on three hundred a year until he succeeded to his

property; but, as Dolly reminds me, that was many years ago, and money went further then than it does in these days of high wages, continual strikes, and rabid competition. From what I hear I fancy, however, that the old Squire helps Dolly to settle his accounts with his tailor and livery-stable keeper.

In reading novels one is always struck with the idleness of the Guardsman: he is making his hands white; he is adorning his outward man; he is flirting, lounging, eating, dancing, riding, driving, shooting, yachting, hunting, but never working. Far be it from me to say that Dolly's is an industrious or arduous life, yet it is not one that is 'all beer and skittles.' What with attending commanding officer's or adjutant's parade during drill season, and going on guard as a rule about every second day, he is not the complete idler and 'chalk soldier' many suppose. When on duty at St. James's or Buckingham Palace, or at the Tilt-yard, a grateful nation entertains him at St. James's Palace at a dinner, which costs the country some three thousand a year. At this dinner there are the three officers on guard at St. James's and Buckingham Palace, the two officers on guard at the Tilt-yard, three officers of the Life Guards, and the guests of the evening. At the Tower he has a regular mess; but when it is his lot to march his men down to Thread-needle-street for the protection of that treasury of the nation, the Bank of England, the directors of that distinguished company furnish him with a neat little dinner, and even extend their hospitality to a couple of his friends when required. Occasionally Dolly asks me to be his guest, and, indolent youngster that he is,

instead of marching his men along the Strand, Fleet-street, and Cheapside, he limits his pedestrianism to walking the soldiers to St. James's Park station, and conveying them to their destination by the agreeable process of travelling by the Underground Railway, the fares of course being defrayed out of Dolly's pocket. No wonder that the men have no objection to Mr. Clavering being on Bank guard!

When I dine in Thread-needle-street with Dolly, and look at my cheery host—the 'war-paint' discarded, and his manly chest incased in an easy shooting-coat—I cannot but think how many young men have sat in that Bank parlour with life and hope before them, and how various have been their careers! There was Jones, happiest and most amusing of private actors; he was shot down on that pitiless hillside of the Alma. Brown, after a brief career, and a decided refusal from his father to pay his bills, became bankrupt, and is now a partner in a respectable wine-merchant's office in the east of England. Smith, the dullest soldier who ever cried out 'form fours' or 'shoulder arms,' is now a great military authority, and one of the shining lights in the House of Commons. Robbynson has exchanged arms for the toga, and is now Secretary of Legation somewhere across the Atlantic. Snooks, a feather-weight and the buck of his regiment in his time, is now sixteen stone, dresses like a farmer, and is great at agricultural dinners, ploughing matches, and in breeding stock. What a funny world it is! Those whom we thought fools are now the wise of the earth, the failures are brilliant successes, the poor have become rich, and those from whom we expected such great things

have turned out the most commonplace of mediocrities. True it is that nothing is certain but the unforeseen, and that he is a sage man who can predict the future of his friends.

Still, in spite of this remark, I will take upon myself to cast the future of my friend, young Clavering. Unless the old Squire shall have been summoned by *pallida mors* to take his place in the vault of his ancestors beneath the aisle of the parish church at Trevennis, Dolly will remain in the Bombardiers till he obtains his company. For the next few years he will enjoy to the full, in all sobriety, I hope, the pleasures of the town. With all the buoyancy of youth he will let the future take care of itself, and bask in the sunshine of that present which seems eternal to one-and-twenty.

'Quid sit futurum cras, fuge querere; et
Quem sors dierum cunque dabit, lucro
Appone; nec dulces amores
Sperne puer; neque tu choreas,
Donec virenti canities abest
Morosa.'

Then perhaps by his sixth or seventh season he will begin to find that there is, after all, a certain amount of monotony in the distractions of society; that dinners and dances are a bore; that the gossip of the club is dull; and that it is possible to have too much of polo, pigeon-shooting, cricket, lawn-tennis, and incessant excitement. In other words, his watchful mother and affectionate sisters will pass in review all the nice eligible girls they know of; a selection will be made; they will be trotted out for Dolly's inspection; the object of his preference will be made to frequently cross his path in town; she will be asked down to Trevennis in the autumn; a fond companionship will be struck up between her and Dolly's sisters; and one fine morning Adolphus Frederick Cla-

vering, captain (but, alas for the days of privilege, no longer captain *and* lieutenant-colonel!) in the Bombardier Guards, will find himself standing at the altar-rails, ready to be offered as a victim to matrimony. As a married man and heir to a goodish property he will abandon soldiering, and betake himself to civil pursuits. By this time it is not improbable that the old Squire will be feeling Charon to ferry him over the Styx, and Dolly will succeed to the paternal fortune and honours. He will not be lavish or ostentatious, for his fortune will not permit of extravagance; yet his house will be by no means closed to the country around, or to his various London friends. He will be put into the commission of the peace, and when he goes to Court he will wear the scarlet uniform of a deputy-lieutenant. He will hunt a good deal, till he gets fat and his nervous system begins to break down. He will be always fond of shooting, for sight generally lasts longer than nerves. He will be a good landlord, and interest himself moderately in agricultural matters. If he has a few hundreds to throw away, and wants occupation, he may amuse himself by farming the home-farm on his own account. His wife and children will look after the poor. He will be on good terms with his vicar, and make a point of putting in an appearance in the square curtained pew of the parish church every Sunday morning. He will come up to town for three months in the year, and as he gets older abuse the change from the country to London. In short, he will be a model country gentleman, and he will be none the less popular in his county, and none the worse husband and father, because he is a man of the world, and in his youth was a Guardsman.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER V.

THERE ARE HAPPY MOMENTS IN LIFE !

I AGAIN crept through the entrance passage, and once outside I took up my station at a little distance from the opening of the mole cricket's grotto, on a clod of earth brightened by a warm sunbeam, which shone through the strawberry-leaves. I half unclosed my elytræ or wing-covers, and basked for a few minutes in the soft warm air of the kind of arbour formed by the plants above me. I then attended to my toilette. It is an hereditary peculiarity amongst us to be careful of our persons. We love cleanliness, we are sensitive to pleasant scents, and we abhor bad smells. The insult offered to me the evening before by the handsome carabus had therefore affected me most painfully. I thought of it again

as I was cleaning my claws, and my veins swelled with fresh indignation. But I soon dispelled these disagreeable reflections ; and with a view to calling up others more in harmony with the beauty of the scene in which I found myself, I struck up one of my most joyful songs.

I was in good spirits, and I sang for a long time. Now and then, however, I paused to listen for an answering voice ; but it was evident that no creature of my own species lived in these parts, for not a sound betrayed the presence of another cricket. This silence struck me as strange, for I was not accustomed to it. Still I must own I rather liked it than otherwise, on account, probably, of the enmity shown to me by my

brothers, which had resulted in destroying the charm that their voices would have had for me if they had been friendly.

Time flew fast; but I was so glad to be safe, and free from anxiety, that I could not bring myself to close the solo-concert to which I was treating myself. The sound of my own voice elated me, and presently, carried away by a kind of joyful intoxication, I found myself jumping about and gesticulating like a mad creature.

'Ah, well,' I said to myself, 'one can do as one likes when one is alone.'

I had fancied myself in solitude, but I had a witness. In the very height of my excitement I suddenly met the eyes of a grasshopper, perched motionless upon a leaf beside me, and looking at me with an expression of surprised amusement. How did she get there without my seeing her? How long had she been there? It was impossible for me to tell. On catching sight of her my ardour was suddenly damped, and I stood still as if petrified, in the most ridiculous attitude possible, with three legs on the ground and the others in the air. At the same moment the conviction that I cut a very ridiculous figure shot across my mind, and my first impulse was to dart down my cousin's passage. My agitation prevented my seeing the entrance immediately, and one brief moment of hesitation sufficed to make me change my mind, and saved me from crowning my vagaries by what would have been a piece of sheer folly.

I stole another glance at the grasshopper, and saw that she was a beautiful young creature of a green colour, and with a fine figure. She remained motionless, and kept her eyes fixed on me with what seemed to me a most ironical expression. It became imperative to

do something to alter the situation, and I could think of nothing better than to burst out laughing. The grasshopper smiled; and then, infected by the contagion of my example, frankly joined in my merriment. I was saved!

'This fortunate meeting delights me, charming grasshopper,' I began. 'I thought I was quite alone, and I am more than glad to be able to pay my respects to one so worthy of every attention.'

'Are you really so very delighted, friend cricket?' was the reply. 'It strikes me that my appearance just now—well, surprised you a little, if it did not annoy you.'

'I was surprised, I own. Have you only just come?'

'I was going by, when curiosity made me stop a minute. You seem in very good spirits.'

'O, we all try to shake off our depression sometimes. I really am the most unfortunate of crickets.'

'I could never have believed it.'

'It's true, for all that.'

'You have rather an original way of giving vent to your trouble.'

'I was indulging in all those vagaries just now merely to try and divert my thoughts. I am a miserable exile.'

'An exile!'

'Yes, an exile. I was born far from here. But the victim of the unjust hatred of my family, I had to leave my home and the lovely scenes of my childhood to escape from the iniquitous plots which daily placed my life in danger.'

'Poor cricket!'

'Arrived in this neighbourhood, after going through the most terrible dangers, a lucky accident led to my meeting a female relation, who accorded me the kindest hospitality.'

'Who is she?'

'An elderly mole cricket. There is the entrance to her house.'

'I know her; she is a good creature.'

'Very good; a little peculiar though.'

'So she is.'

'You know her, you say?'

'O, only slightly. She is a great stay-at-home; but I have heard of her.'

'You belong to these parts, then? You have relations and friends here?'



'I was born in this strawberry-bed, and I have never left it.'

We chatted on in this style about different things for more than an hour. The grasshopper delighted me, and I thoroughly enjoyed her conversation.

'This is a charming neighbourhood,' I said at last. 'I think I shall settle here. You walk this side sometimes, I suppose?'

'Sometimes. I go just where the humour takes me.'

'Sweet grasshopper, how glad

I am to have met you! You seem to sympathise with my misfortunes. I can hear it in the very tones of your voice, and in listening to you I forget all my past troubles.'

'Good-bye, dear cricket. I can't stop any longer.'

'What! you are going already?'

'I must.'

'Shall I see you again?'

'Perhaps.'

As she spoke she made me a graceful gesture of farewell, and with one bound sprang away. For a moment I saw her noiselessly poising herself on her light-green wings, and then she disappeared in the distance.

I remained for a few minutes in deep thought, gazing in the direction the grasshopper had taken. The day was already drawing to its close, and my astonishment was great at noticing that the sun was beginning to set. How very quickly the time had passed, to be sure! I was very hungry, which was not much to be wondered at, for I had eaten nothing since the morning.

The lateness of the hour and my appetite alike warned me that it was time to rejoin my companions. I was not at all afraid of not finding enough to eat, for what the mole cricket had said in the morning about her numerous meals made me feel sure that her table would be well spread.

I was right. On going into the dining-room, I saw my cousin at her twelfth or fifteenth repast of cockchafer grubs, whilst Firefly, apparently sound asleep, lay on a ledge on one of the walls of the grotto. He had, however, had the consideration to leave his lamp burning. The spider, still wrapped in her lethargic torpor, had not made the slightest movement, and was dimly visible, lying on her side, and with outstretched limbs,

in the corner to which I had dragged her the night before.

'Where do you come from?' the mole cricket asked me, between two mouthfuls. 'We haven't seen you all day; your walk has been a long one.'

'No, it hasn't,' I replied; 'I did not go far from your house. The blue sky, the brilliant sunshine, and the heat were so delightful that I spent the whole day enjoying them. Your home is very pleasantly situated.'

'Truth to tell, I don't care much personally for its advantages; but I am duly and fully sensible of them, because it is to them that I owe my abundant and varied diet, a privilege I value above any other.'

'Well, that is at least a candid confession.'

'It surprises you. Ah, friend, you are still young! When you come to my age you'll change your mind on that point. Your poetry will be gradually transformed to prose, and you won't despise the pleasures of the table so much. Every age has its fancies.'

'How old are you, then?'

'What a very indiscreet remark! Whoever heard of such a question being put to a person of my sex! I am as old as I look; so now you know.'

'I beg pardon, dear cousin,' I replied, laughing. 'I hadn't the slightest intention of being rude. You told me yesterday you were old enough to be my mother, and I thought—'

'I told you that, did I? Well, perhaps I did, and you must be content with that vague assertion. One's age is a point on which one is willing that there should be some little uncertainty.'

'Has anything new occurred during my absence?'

'Nothing. Firefly has been sleeping the calm and peaceful

sleep of a virtuous insect with a well-filled stomach and an easy conscience, and the spider is still sleeping off the effects of the poison.'

'Do you think she will remain in that state much longer?'

'I neither know nor care. But come; eat this balaninus grub. Its larva lives in nuts, and has a very delicate flavour.'

'It really is delicious. Do you find many of them?'

'There is a nut-tree not far from here, and at this time of year the larvæ of the balanini or nut-weevils leave their nuts through holes nibbled by themselves, and bury themselves in the ground to undergo their transformation.'

'You certainly have an advantage over me in being able to burrow in the ground after your food. We other crickets have to content ourselves with what passes the doors of our homes.'



'But you can burrow in the ground.'

'Yes; but only to make holes to live in.'

'What do you feed upon?'

'On flies, wood-lice, and ants.'

'Pooh! Ants have a horrid acid taste.'

'O, you get used to that. We eat blades of grass too.'

'Miserable diet! Live with me; you shall have a good meal for nothing every day.'

'You are very kind, dear cousin, and I would gladly accept your invitation; but there is one obstacle.'

'And what is that?'

'Your house seems very dark

to me. We shall not always have Firefly's lamp to light us, and besides, I love the sun and its warm beams.'

'And soft breezes and the scent of flowers, and fine scenery and vegetation, and all the rest of it. I understand. Well, settle near here; there's nothing to prevent your scooping out a home to suit you.'

'I had already thought of it.'

'Very well; then you've only to do it.'

I did not think it necessary to mention my meeting with the grasshopper to my cousin, for of course she would have been sure to attribute to it my sudden deter-

mination to take up my residence near her.

'Well, cousin,' she went on, 'have you had enough? You have. Then go to bed now, and good-night to you, unless you would like to go and dream a little by moonlight.'

'No, I am going to sleep. You think there is no danger from moles to-night?'

'There don't seem to have been any in the neighbourhood to-day; but in any case you may rely on my vigilance. I will wake you at the very slightest alarm.'

The night did not pass over so peacefully as its predecessor. In fact, about the middle—at least when I had been, as it seemed to me, asleep a long time—the sound of voices woke me. I listened. Apparently a dispute was going on, in one of the passages of the house, between my cousin, whose voice I recognised at once, and some one whose harsh tones, betraying violent anger, were not altogether unfamiliar to me. I held myself in readiness to fly to the succour of my relative on the first appeal; reflecting, however, that if she had to defend herself in the narrow passage which was the scene of the quarrel, my help would not be of much avail, except to intimidate her adversary by the arrival of unexpected succour. But my intervention was not called for. The voices died away, leading me to conclude that the enemy had beaten a retreat, and then all again became quiet. Firefly slept on all the time, and heard nothing.

The next morning we learnt that my cousin, who sleeps very lightly, had been awakened, by a slight noise, a kind of rustling in the entrance passage; that this noise seemed gradually to approach; that she went to see what it was, and found herself face to face with

a beetle, who for some reason unknown was trying to get into the house; that she inquired the reason of this untimely intrusion, and was answered in a haughty fashion—so insolent is the whole race of beetles; and that the enemy finally beat a retreat, swearing and threatening.

'I have already had similar visitations,' added the mole cricket, 'and am so used to them, that I don't trouble my head about them. Beetles and other predatory insects sometimes come in here and steal my larvæ, and I just lay in a fresh store; but this time your presence here, friend Firefly, compelled me to preserve my home inviolate. That thief might have carried you off under our very noses.'

Firefly expressed her gratitude in glowing terms, and I joined him in congratulating our worthy hostess on her vigilance and courage.

'O, don't pay me so many compliments, friends; they are really quite uncalled for. I'm not a bit afraid of beetles; they have always run away from me.'

'But didn't the last one squirt some nasty liquid over you?'

'No; he couldn't turn round in my passage, and he had to beat a retreat backwards.'

The day passed as the previous one had done. The weather continued fine, and I remained until the evening making music on the little hillock, where I had already spent such pleasant hours. To my great regret the grasshopper did not put in an appearance. Had she been prevented from coming? Had she forgotten me? Grasshoppers are always so giddy. This one, though, had seemed more serious than is usual with her race. She had shown sympathy for me, and the way in which we had parted encouraged me to hope. But I must not think of her any more; it was

too late for her to come to-day, so I returned indoors.

A change had taken place there. The spider had at last awoke from her torpor, and was talking to the glowworm. The remains of food lay beside her. I was told that as she came to, she had cried out that she was hungry, and that the mole cricket had generously given her two or three little larvæ of coleoptera, which she had eaten in default of flies.

She came up to me and thanked me for interfering on her behalf at a moment when her life had hung on a thread, which proved to me that she had heard our conversation. All this time the mole cricket was bustling about as if she had something else to think of. It was evident she felt slightly embarrassed.

We did not talk that evening. As soon as supper was over, we all went to sleep in our own corners. The spider placed herself close to me, Firefly stretched himself on his usual projection, and the mole cricket reposed near the entrance passage.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRAP.

I was sleeping soundly, when a rough shake woke me with a start.

'Be quick,' cried the mole cricket. 'Here is the mole! *Sauve qui peut!*'

At this ominous cry I started to my feet, and rushed into the nearest passage. At the same instant I felt something catch hold of me; but it was not the time to pause to see what it was. The passage I had chosen did not seem to be the one of egress; in my agitation I had taken the first which came—the one close to my sleeping-place. No, it was evidently not the way out; and if

not, it was unknown to me. Where did it lead? I should lose myself in this subterranean labyrinth and in the profound darkness. Anyhow the first thing to be done was to escape as quickly as possible, and I rushed on at a frantic pace. 'Bother! what is that clinging to my tail? Ah!'

This cry was wrong from me by terror. The earth suddenly gave way beneath my feet, and, for what seemed to me a long time, I felt myself falling through space.

A rough shock stopped me. I was at the bottom of a vast pit. Fortunately I was not hurt, though I had fallen head foremost. But where was I? I felt the ground about me. It was smooth and very hard; it was not soil. The sense of touch was all I had to guide me, for the darkness was complete. I advanced slowly, groping my way with outstretched antennæ, till I came to the foot of a perpendicular wall. This wall was perfectly even, as smooth as the floor. I paced slowly along it, feeling my way before me for fear of another tumble.

On, on I walked for a long, long time, and still under my feet I felt the same smooth hard ground; and on my left the same perpendicular wall as smooth as the ground.

Where could I be? I had not a notion. What was this subterranean channel? Where did it lead? Where did it end? I must be a long distance from my starting-point. One thing was certain: I was not sinking into the depths of the earth, for I was walking on firm ground. Presently I thought I made out a stair. Ah, yes, there was another up there! I should most decidedly wait here till the morning. If stars were to be seen, of course there must be an opening in the

ceiling, and I should be able to see more clearly when the sun rose. I must stop walking, and wait.

But what had become of the object which had clung to me, and which I had carried with me in my flight? I no longer felt it. It had probably let go when I fell, and remained up above.

The day was long in coming, and I went on thinking, not to any very practical purpose though;

for the more I thought, the more incomprehensible appeared the strange adventure which had befallen me. My poor companions! What had become of them? The mole cricket would have escaped by one of her passages—she was used to such sudden alarms; but the spider and Firefly—they could not run so fast. The spider! The life we had saved had profited her little. And the glowworm! He would have been sure to lose his



presence of mind; very likely he forgot to put out his lamp, and was the first to fall a victim to the mole. I was musing thus when a voice close to my ear made me start.

'Cricket!' some one whispered very softly.

'Ah! What? Who is there?'

'It is I, the spider; your companion in the mole cricket's grotto.'

'You! Impossible!'

'Hush! Speak lower; perhaps the mole is not far off.'

'The mole! Why, we must be ever so far from him! How did you manage to follow me here?'

'I have not moved since our fall.'

'Nonsense! I have been walking for more than an hour.'

'Yes; I have heard you. You have been walking, but without making much progress.'

'What do you mean?'

'You were going round and round.'

These words were a revelation. We were at the bottom of a circular pit. That accounted for my always feeling a wall on my left; yes, that was it! I had been going round and round. Why did not the idea occur to me before?

'Wretched spider!' I exclaimed angrily; 'you heard me going round you for an hour, and never said a word!'

'How could I know what you were driving at! Our fall made me rather giddy, and I was weak, too, after my long fast; so when I came to my senses, and heard you running round and round me

without speaking, I thought the fright, the excitement—well, had upset you a little. You won't be hurt at the idea which occurred to me?'

'What idea?'



'Well, I thought you had become—'

'Mad?'

'Yes, that's it.'

'Ha, ha, ha!'

'Hush! don't laugh so loud.'

'Well, my long tramp might easily make you think me demented.'

'And I did not feel altogether comfortable—quite alone with a madman! So I just spun a thread up to the ceiling, and swung myself out of your reach. When you stopped walking, I thought you were probably calmer, and I spoke to you.'

'Do you know where we are?'

'Of course I do. We are at the bottom of an earthenware pot set by the gardener to catch the mole cricket. Don't you remember what she told us?'

'O yes, I know. Why ever didn't I think of that before?'

'You were too much excited. Whilst you were running about, I was reflecting. We are taken in the trap laid for your cousin, friend cricket.'

'Then we are lost.'

'That does not follow.'

'You have hopes of our escape?'

'Yes, I have—unless the mole comes upon us in his burrowing; there's some fear of that.'

'Heaven forefend! But, by the way, just tell me how you came to the bottom of the pot with me. I suppose you followed me closely?'

'Very closely indeed. Not trusting to the speed of my own legs when the mole cricket gave the alarm, I clung to one of the ends of your tail,* and you carried me off with you.'

'Ah, it was you I had in tow! I really might have guessed it; but in my confusion—What a pity the same happy thought did not occur to poor Firefly! He might have clung to me too.'

'I thought of it for him.'

'What do you mean?'

'At the cry of "*Sauve qui peut!*" I rushed to Firefly, caught him up between my legs, told him to put out his lamp at once, and then I flung myself upon your tail, clutching at it with my mandibles just as you plunged into the passage.'

'He slipped away from you, then, in our flight?'

'Not a bit of it. He is with us

now. In our fall I instinctively loosened my grasp of him, just at the very moment when we were flung into space by the rebounding of your tail from against the end of the passage. We both struck against the ceiling, and I fell down from it again; but he was probably caught by something. There he is above us. Do you see him?'

'O, is that Firefly? Why, I took him for a star just now! I was certainly out of my mind.'

'Yes, that is he. He has only half extinguished his lamp.'

'Why does he remain there without moving or speaking? Hi, Firefly!'

'Hush! Don't shout at him like that; I think he is faint. When he woke just now to find himself in my grasp, he was probably in the dark as to my intentions, and very likely thought his last hour was come. That would account for his present state of torpor.'

'We must go to his assistance. But how can we get up there?'

'I am going there now.'

I guessed that the spider meant to spin a thread from the floor to the ceiling, and that she would thus be able to fetch down the glowworm.

As she was going up, I confided to her what my cousin had told me about Firefly's sex, begging her to respect his *incognito*, which she promised to do.

Presently a slight trembling of the luminous point I had taken for a star showed me that the attempt had been successful. The luminous point came down; and when it was near the ground, the faint light it gave enabled me to make out my old companion huddled together between the legs of the spider, who, heavily laden as she was, came down very slowly. Arrived at the bottom of the

* When the wings of a cricket are folded, they form what looks like a double tapering tail.—TRANS.

pot, she laid down her burden, and began to rub it, urging me to do the same.

Firefly had really lost consciousness, but, thanks to our energetic friction, he soon came to himself; and his first words, after an astonished glance round him, were a stammering inquiry as to where he was, what had happened, and what had become of the mole cricket. He remem-

bered nothing; everything which had happened since our sudden retreat from the dining-room had escaped him. And it was not much wonder that, roughly seized as he had been by the spider, the stupor of fear should have immediately succeeded that of sleep, reducing him to the state of unconsciousness from which we had just aroused him.

We told him all that had hap-



pened; and when he learnt how much he owed to the spider, whose presence of mind, when the rest of us were beside ourselves with terror, had saved his life, he expressed his gratitude to his preserver in the warmest terms. He thanked me too, though I assured him with a smile that I had been but an unconscious agent in his rescue.

'Now that you have come to yourself, friend Firefly,' said the spider, 'you may as well give us

a little more light from your lamp, for we can hardly see a bit. That's the next thing to be done; for then we shall know better where we are, and can consult as to the best means of getting away.'

Firefly hastened to comply with this request, and we were soon able to examine the place to which the accident of our flight had brought us.

The spider had guessed rightly. We were at the bottom of a large

earthenware pot, such as is used for the cultivation of flowers. The roof of our prison was formed by a clod of soil, kept in its place by some bits of stick, between which hung the roots of grass. It was on one of these sticks that the glowworm had fallen and remained. At the upper edge of the pot we could see a round opening, which we knew to be the entrance to the mole cricket's gallery. Opposite a similar opening represented the continuation of the same gallery, which was broken by the hollow formed by the pot.

The trap was cleverly set, as proved by our having been caught in it.

By which of the two openings I had arrived, I should have been at a loss to say, for I was quite

thrown out of my bearings in this circular pit.

'You came through that one,' said the spider, guessing my thoughts from the way I was looking about me.

'How can you tell?'

'Easily enough. The direction of my thread shows you where Firefly was when I fetched him, above that cross-road which juts out. Well, he could only have been flung there from the point opposite to us. If he had come from the other, he must have alighted on the opposite side of the same passage.'

'True, true.'

I admired the sagacity of our companion, and from that moment I felt confidence in her power to extricate us from our awkward situation.

(To be continued.)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER IV. THE REALM OF THE SÄNTIS.

'O Sântis! thou dost rightly wear the crown,
For seven princes stand about thy throne,
And boundless is that merry realm of thine.
E'en Tyrol flashes icy greeting back,
In token of allegiance. Yea, what court
Can bear the least comparison with thine,
My proud and hoary monarch of the Alps!'
A. V. DROSTE-SÜSSHOFF.

In the midst of the village of Appenzell
There stands a green linden-tree.

AND under the green lime-tree sit fresh-coloured well-knit lads, and neat maidens in snow-white sleeves, decked with gay kerchiefs and ribbons. How they laugh in the summer sunshine! As for the boys, they are perfectly wild, and sing their lusty songs at the top of their voices, making the air ring again.

The old men, who are mostly thin and sunburnt, stand leaning against the bean-covered garden-fence, puffing away at their short wooden pipes, and sending the smoke of their strong tobacco into the fresh hay-scented air. The married women sit at the oriel-windows, with glittering necklaces round their throats and red-silk hoods on their heads, either looking out over their bouquet of Sunday flowers, or else gossiping busily, in their broad kindly *patois*, with any of the companions of their week's toil who may happen to be passing.

Shrieking swallows are sailing about the dark-brown wooden roofs; and from the soft green meadows which rise behind the houses are to be heard the merry shouts of the young people, the

bleating of the goats, and, farther off, the rumble of carriages full of tourists or visitors, who are coming to undergo the whey-cure.

St. Gall presents a different scene at this same hour. Here the well-dressed fashionable citizens are either walking or driving comfortably out of all the gates of the town on their way to the Freudenberg, to Bernegg, Fröhlichsegg, and Vöglisegg, to enjoy their Sunday view of the green realm of the Sântis, which extends as far down as the Glärnisch. The factory chimneys stare smokeless into the air, as if they were astonished at themselves; and the long rows of windows in the mills where cotton is spun and muslin woven look at the Sunday sky as if they found the time tedious. Nothing is to be heard but the incessant whistle of the railway engine, and the sound of the hotel omnibus as it rattles noisily over the pavement, for the town is taking its ease like a comfortable citizen.

Each of these two principal places may be taken as fairly characteristic of the respective cantons of Appenzell and St. Gall.

St. Gall encloses the little district of Appenzell as the nut-shell encloses the kernel; and, on looking at it in the map, one is disposed to think Appenzell must be something very special to be so carefully guarded. But those who expect to carry out the comparison of the nut and the shell will find themselves mistaken; unless, indeed, they be thinking of a silver

nut in a golden shell—then they will be right enough.

The two neighbours, indeed, sometimes have a friendly argument as to which is nut and which shell; and in that case the Appenzeller, who is famed for his witty sayings, has the laugh on his own side. 'Come now,' says he to the native of St. Gall, who is reproaching him with the insignificance and worthlessness of his canton, 'come now, St. Gall is the apple and Appenzell's the core, isn't it? But if the core is rotten, how long will the apple last? But the air is so pure that neither 'Bitzgi' nor 'Epfel,' neither core nor apple, has ever turned rotten, and it hangs fresh and juicy on the tree of the Confederacy, looking like fruit of golden promise. Appenzell deserves to be compared, not with the core, but rather with a certain jewel, concerning which there is the following tradition: A shepherd of Brüllisau, near Appenzell, had gone with his flocks to the Brülltobel, one of the most bleak and desolate upland valleys of this little mountain-district. In the night he saw something in the stream which shone brightly. It grew larger and larger until it illuminated the whole spot. But he was afraid; and when he went to the place at daybreak he could not find the precious stone, for which he ever afterwards sought in vain. But the beautiful gleaming gem has been found, and the little canton of Appenzell is itself the sapphire, and St. Gall is the golden setting which holds it fast,

'As the ring its diamond.'

Thur, Sitter, and Rhein may be said to be the encircling ring, and the most prominent point of the stone is the lofty Säntis.

The canton of St. Gall seems

to have been formed in much the same way as the conglomerate which we call 'pudding-stone,' and the Swiss 'Nagelfluh,' which is composed of rounded pebbles of various colours firmly cemented together. Just so St. Gall grew up by degrees out of the ruins of various small principalities which lay within its territory, and had been shivered to pieces by the dire effects of revolution.

Truly there is no lack of vigour or love of labour either in St. Gall or Appenzell, and both alike take part in the pastoral pursuits which are carried on upon the green mountain-slopes, and in the silk-weaving, embroidery, and linen and cotton manufactures which employ the inhabitants of the valleys; in fact, trade is in a most flourishing condition. There is nothing to enervate the people in the climate, and Nature renders them all the assistance in her power by giving them a good supply of water. The rivers Sitter and Saar, Seetz and Linth, Tamina and Thur, Glatt, Neckar, and Steinach, all flow through their territory, which includes the Lake of Wallenstadt and is bordered by the Bodensee and Lake of Zürich.

'The inhabitants of this land,' as an ancient little book says,* 'are rough but upright, daring and dauntless whenever danger threatens their fatherland, as is sufficiently testified by the long war they have carried on, and by their heroic deeds. They maintain themselves by weaving linen, and grow rich on the produce of their cows and goats.'

A more severe judgment than this had been passed upon them previously by the holy Notker, who lived about A.D. 900. The land did not please him at all,

* *Germano-Helveto-Sparta*, by Joh. Caspar Steinern, 1684.



THE SÂNTIS.

and when on one occasion the Abbot of Reichenau asked him what he thought of St. Gall, he answered, 'Dura viris et dura fide, durissima gleba' (The people are coarse, their faith is rude, and the soil very hard).

The person who reports these words adds apologetically, 'This may be a natural result of the mountain-air; for, as it gives greater strength to all sorts of plants and animals, that is, more astringent juices and stronger fibres, its effect upon human beings must be of a similar character, and in proportion as it invigorates them it must make them less pliant and less susceptible of cultivation.'

When St. Gall journeyed through the great forest of Arbon and into the mountains in search of a spot where he might live in quiet retirement, he was accompanied by one of Willimar's deacons. This man, besides being a deacon, was a mighty hunter, and was well acquainted not only with the paths through the forest, but with the haunts of the wild animals. St. Gall's choice fell upon a spot in an upland valley where the little river Steinach flows over the rocks; but of this the deacon did not at all approve. He saw that the holy man in his defenceless state would be exposed to great danger from the bears and wolves; and perhaps he had learnt by experience that these creatures have no respect either for the cross or the religious habit. He spoke seriously to his master accordingly, but the latter had no fears. Putting his whole trust in God, he immediately consecrated the place and erected a cross of hazel-wood.

To be sure a bear paid him a friendly visit the very first evening, but this did not disturb him. With the greatest *naïveté* he

offered the animal a share of his supper, and then Bruin trotted quietly back to the green shades of the wood.

With the assistance of only two disciples, Mang and Theodor, the saint now set to work with axe and spade to clear the ground, and build himself a meagre log-hut and a little wooden chapel on the very same spot where the abbey church now stands.

The small seed grew and increased. The king's chamberlain, who was attached to him, soon made St. Gall a present of the land upon which he had hitherto sojourned only as a foreigner and visitor. The Bishop of Constance and the criminal judge of Arbon supplied him with woodcutters and agricultural labourers. The number of his disciples increased to twelve, and by degrees a busy little settlement gathered round the solitary log-hut. The adjoining land soon came under cultivation, and a narrow road was made through the wood to Arbon. But the main object of the mission—that of rooting out the belief in the old German and Roman gods—was vigorously pursued at the same time. St. Gall instructed the wild people around him, but devoted yet more attention to the training of his disciples as teachers and preachers, in the hope that through them he might reap a more abundant harvest.

The untiring old man pursued his labours in this district for six-and-twenty years, and he was ninety-six years old when he died. His work, however, survived him. His grave in the lonely wood soon attracted people from far and near, for the old man was reputed to have worked miracles, and many valuable bequests were made to St. Gall. It did not, however, attain to much importance during the first century.



THE OLD PARSONAGE AT ST. PETERSZELL.

Peterzell lies in a deep valley not far from the source of the Neckar, and owes its origin to the abbey of St. Gall, and its endowment to the lords of Rorschach and the Counts of Toggenburg. It is chiefly noticeable for the old buildings once occupied by the Capitular of St. Gall, which are now used as a parsonage. In the other parsonage lives the pastor of the Reformed Church, for half the community are Romanists, the other half Protestants.

As the convent decayed the prosperity of the town increased; and as the monks degenerated the citizens became more powerful. Many of the latter indeed were in the service of the abbots, and held fiefs of them; but those who preferred to be independent were also tolerably well-to-do, thanks to their trades and crafts. We have now reached the close of the thirteenth century, when the light of freedom was beginning to dawn upon the citizens, and many concessions were necessarily made to them in consequence. They were allowed, for one thing, the free control of their houses, which was considered a great matter; and they were also permitted to elect their own councillors, and to build them a town-hall of their own — *domus supra prætorium*. Merchants begin to settle in the place, others come to the market, and the linen-trade begins. The meadows round the town serve as bleaching-grounds, and the slopes outside the walls look as if they were covered with snow. 'This cheerful fertile spot is,' as we are informed, 'peculiarly adapted for bleaching purposes, and the inhabitants supply Italy, Spain, France, and Germany with great quantities of linen.'

The description given above affords a tolerably accurate picture of what the town was in the

thirteenth century. Its prosperity was on the increase, as was also its longing to be freed from the restraint of the convent; and it was gathering strength to shake off the yoke.

In the year 1314 a conflagration destroyed almost all that man had laboured so industriously to build. The convent was burnt down, so were the numerous churches and chapels and the houses of the citizens, only eight of which were left standing. For a time there was a doubt as to whether St. Gall should be rebuilt, and many of the citizens prepared to seek a home elsewhere.

From this time, and for several centuries, the people, their country, and their history are all enveloped in a thick cloud of smoke and vapour, from which issue sounds of confusion, the clash of arms, and the cries of victor and vanquished. The veil becomes thicker and thicker, and much goes on beneath it which is hidden from our view.

And now, in this present century, let us lift it up.

Look! look! The summer sun is shining brightly, and there runs a railway-train with its panting engine, climbing up from Rorschach to the green wooded mountains about Steinach. A bad bit of road that was to make, for there were so many old ravines and gullies to be crossed. But the higher the railway mounts, the more the prospect widens; and the eager passengers cannot help being delighted as they gaze from the windows at the golden landscape, the well-cultivated fields, and the white country houses which gleam out upon the slopes.

The town stands higher than almost any other in Europe, and an easy ascent leads the traveller to the top of one of its natural



MARKET-STREET IN ST. GALL.

watch-towers, whence he may obtain an extensive view of the country round. The Freudenberg, as this height is called, is a very favourite resort of old and young, and is much frequented on bright Sundays and holidays. There is a lovely panorama to be seen from the wooded summit.

We are in the realm of the lofty Säntis, and the monarch himself and all his court rise before us to the south; but his dominions are overlooked by other distant mountains, and on bright evenings you may distinctly see the peaks of the Tödi and Glärnisch, the mountains of Schwyz, Mont Pilat, and the Rigi, and may receive a short gentleman-like salutation from the glistening Eiger of the Bernese Oberland.

But there are more attractions for us in the immediate neighbourhood, and we want to make closer acquaintance with the cheerful green meadows of Appenzell.

We pack our knapsack, and the following day finds us at the Hecht or Löwen in Appenzell. If we had come merely to reconnoitre the place itself, we should soon have had enough of it, for there is nothing remarkable about its architecture; and as it lies in a green caldron-like valley, intersected by the Sitter, it cannot be said to be romantically situated. In the Bernese Oberland you have one or more giant mountains facing your hotel window, and you hear the constant sound of grand waterfalls, whereas here you will find only monotonous gently-swell-ing green hills, not overlooked by a single neighbouring peak, not even by the Säntis. There will be nothing, except perhaps a few little picturesque bits, to attract those who remember the beautiful timber-houses of the Prättigau, or the mediæval architecture of the interior of St. Gall.

The town is crowded, angular, mean-looking, and irregular; and the houses seem to be getting in one another's way. To be sure we have wood-work all brown with age and projecting eaves and oriels; but the houses look as if they had been put together by persons who had no love for or pleasure in them, and they have little in common with the clean, neat, you may almost say shining, and certainly well-lighted dwellings of Outer-Rhoden. Somebody calls Appenzell 'a gray speck on the face of the bright green.'

The only buildings worth mentioning are the parish church, which is rather pretty, and two convents.

But the light of modern times is beginning to penetrate even such places as this; and as Appenzell is very well-to-do, we may expect to see her exchanging the unsightly garb of the shepherd or weaver for something more becoming as soon as the railway comes up to her convent-walls.

Those, then, who have come here to see a town will yawn and go away again as fast as they can; while those who wish to study the people will take up their quarters in one of the clean, cosy, home-like inns, where things are conducted in the good old style, and will ramble about the valleys and mountains of the neighbourhood every morning.

The people are proud of the name of 'Appenzellers,' and are thoroughly natural and unaffected. The traveller will see plenty of them without going beyond the village, should he have the good fortune to find himself there when the Assembly of the canton meets, or at the time of the great annual festival called the 'Chilbe.' 'You see signs of the Chilbe everywhere, and then on a sudden, lo,



A PEASANT OF APPENZELL.

it is here !' say the good people of Appenzell ; and we are in luck's way to-day, for the festival is just beginning. Prepare, then, you fine ladies and gentlemen, who are still loitering, maybe, at Gais

or Weissbad or elsewhere,—prepare, this beautiful autumn day, to see what real gaiety is for once in your lives. The mirth is not exactly suited to a London drawing-room, it is true ; and instead

of kid gloves and dress-coats you will see shirt-sleeves, heavy hob-nailed shoes, and perhaps leather breeches; but the enjoyment is great for all that. The majority of those present have been as entirely cut off from the world for some time past as the sailor upon the ocean, and many and various are the privations they have had to endure in their remote mountain-dwellings. Now, however, the superfluous energies which have been pent up for months find vent at last, and the merry-makers feel that they have a right for once to break through all their usual habits and run wild.

The songs of Appenzell are genuine popular songs, with plenty of freshness and boldness, and sometimes not a little impudence, about them. They are older than any of the grandfathers or great-grandfathers now living, and the schoolmaster has not at present succeeded in exterminating them here, as he has done in most of the other cantons. They bear a great resemblance to the famous 'Schnadahüpfeln,' and the melodies to which they are sung are likewise similar; but it is difficult to present them to the English reader, as most people would find the Appenzell dialect well-nigh unintelligible, while their peculiar characteristics must needs evaporate in a translation. Here, however, is a specimen:

'A year is not long :
Then married we'll be,
And I'll be thy husband,
And thou my wif-ie.'

'Black hair, dark-brown eyes,
And a dimple in her chin—
Now you know the sweetheart
That I hope to win.'

'We wander through the shady wood,
Where many a bird doth sing;
We sit us down to rest awhile,
And watch them on the wing.
We take each other by the hand,
We kiss each other too,
In token that until we part
We will be fond and true.'

* * * * *
'My house has no door,
And my door has no key,
And I've lost my sweetheart—
'Tis all up with me!
And now that I've lost her
I'm glad to be free,
And I quite mean to find
Some one else to love me!'

But although the people love their cattle enthusiastically, they have hardly any genuine pastoral songs. A great many of the expressions in use at home and abroad, numberless proverbs and phrases, have reference to, or are drawn from, the various experiences of the cowherd's life, and the very children have no more favourite game than that of 'playing cows,' where one child is the herdsman, another the cowboy, and the rest cows; but all this has had no influence whatever on the popular poetry.

People often talk of the famous 'Chüereiha,' literally 'Cow-rows,' better known as the 'Ranz des Vaches,' the song which the cowherds use to call their cattle home; but even fifty years ago it was beginning to die out, and very few young herdsmen of the present day can sing it correctly. The words are not particularly poetical, but the peculiarly plaintive long-drawn melody used to fill the hearts of the Swiss with a profound feeling of home-sickness if they chanced to hear it when far away from their own land. So powerful, indeed, was its effect, that it caused some of the soldiers on foreign service to desert, which led to its being prohibited in France on pain of death.

It contains some rude and scornful remarks upon matrimony, for the herdsman nowhere feels so free and happy as when he is among the cows he loves so tenderly, and it winds up with the glorification of their merits.

The following is a literal translation of the famous old 'Ranz

des Vaches' of Appenzell, the metre of which is quite irregular and unrhymed, except as regards the two stanzas at the end :

'Come hither, come hither, Loba!
 Call them together by their names, the
 old and the young,
 The old all together, Loba, Loba — —,
 Loba, Lo — — — ba!
 Cows all together, together, together,
 Lo — ba, Lo — — — ba!
 When I to the cattle am piping, am
 piping, am piping;
 The kine all together haste homewards,
 haste homewards—
 Ay, homewards—yes, homewards.
 They are lovely and free,
 And sweet are they, too. Loba, Loba!
 Were it well to give up our singing,
 Have a cradle stand in the room
 For the man to keep it rocking,
 While the wind blows through every
 hole!
 Lo — ba, Lo — — — ba, Loba, Loba,
 Lo — — — ba!
 Drive them hither—ay, hither, toge-
 ther, all together;
 There are Hinked and Stinked,
 And Bbltzet and Gschegget,
 Gflecket and Bläset,
 Schwanzert and Tanzert,
 Grossbuch and Ruch,
 Langbeneri and Haglebeneri—
 Drive them hither—yes, hither, now
 hither,
 Loba!

Since I've been married
 I've had no bread;
 Since I've been married
 My luck has fled.

Our cows they are better
 Than any folks alive;
 They drink of the running brook,
 And long may they thrive!"

The mountaineer's own favourite beverage is what he calls 'sufa,' a mixture of whey and milk; but he compliments his beloved cows on their better taste.

All things considered, it is not astonishing to find that the setting out for the mountain pastures in May and June is a very bright and joyous time to the herdsman and his intelligent animals. Very early in the year, as soon as the first soft breath of air seems to whisper that spring is awaking, though the snow be yet lying deep in the valley, a strange sort of restlessness seems to seize both the cattle, who are

weary of their dry food in the stable, and the herdsman, who is sick of the long winter months which he has spent in smoking in the chimney-corner, not much more alive than if he were a dormouse. The cows show their longing for the spring by lowing at unusual times in loud tones, and the herdsman gives more frequent pulls at his leather cap, and goes out oftener to the garden fence, where he stands craning his neck and gazing intently at the mountains by the quarter of an hour together.

The animals and their masters now dream of nothing but green pastures, mountain-air, gushing springs, and the aromatic herbs which grow upon the Alps. And as soon as May has unlocked the mountain-gates, it is as though a flock of wild birds had been suddenly released from a cage. The joyous throng press on and on, up and up; and though they often have to go through the snow, the day of their departure is a regular fête, observed with ringing of bells, wearing of gala dress, with flowers and songs and loud huzzas, and, in fact, with all the pomp and show that circumstances permit.

The return to the valley at the end of the summer bears the same sort of relation to this festival that All Souls'-day does to Easter. It is a day of mourning, and both men and beasts walk along with hanging heads, as if they were weighed down by the more oppressive air of the valley.

These festivals enter so deeply into the life of the dweller among the Alps that he reckons time by them. Thus you will hear him speak of the 'time of the General Assembly,' by which he means the end of April and beginning of May; or he will say 'such and such a thing took place about the

time of "Funkasonntig," or 'at the annual spring fair,' 'when the cattle set out for the mountain-pastures,' 'after hay-harvest,' 'after the second crop,' 'at the autumn fair,' &c. These festivals are so many luminous centres, from which all the other days of the year radiate.

'Funkasonntig,' which we have just mentioned, is the Sunday called in the Roman calendar *Dominus invocavit*, and its observances, like those of St. John's-day or the summer solstice in Tyrol, are of ancient pagan origin. In both places huge bonfires are lighted on the mountains, all sorts of wild pranks are indulged in, and a sort of game is played with discs of burning wood. In former times the heaps of fagots used to be fired at nightfall amid merry peals from the church-bells, and more superstitious practices were in vogue than is the case at the present day.

The annual meeting of the Assembly of the canton is hardly to be called a festival, though regarded as such as soon as the serious business is despatched. It is a glorious institution; but it now survives only in Inner- and Outer-Rhoden, and the cantons of Obwalden, Nidwalden, Glarus, and Uri, its ancient character being most thoroughly maintained in Inner-Rhoden. The sovereign people come together in the open air; they are their own judges and law-givers, and they still administer and exercise in this primitive and direct fashion the ancient rights which their forefathers won with their blood, and they have themselves since vigorously maintained.

The General Assembly reminds one of the ancient 'Thing' of the German races, where the freemen met armed at the place of sacrifice beneath the sacred tree to

choose their district courts and judges, and to make their laws; or it recalls the Campus Martius and Magicampus, the March and May meetings of the Franks, which were attended by all those capable of bearing arms out of every district, and consisted of a review of the forces and a free discussion of the question of peace or war.

The Extraordinary Assembly meets only on special occasions. The Ordinary Assembly comes together on a certain Sunday in spring, when all the inhabitants of Inner-Rhoden go up to Appenzell like one man; those of Outer-Rhoden go up one year to Hunds- wyl and the next to Trojen. The custom is a very ancient one; for the people of Appenzell—and, indeed, each separate parish—were in the habit of assembling as early as the sixteenth century for an annual inspection of arms, those being times when the sword needed to be always sharp and the halberd always bright. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, it was again impressed upon the people that every respectable man who was capable of wearing arms should carry magnificent long side-arms; and even at the present day, though the persons of most distinction wear decent modern swords, you may still see the Appenzeller striding along at the Assembly with some bent, rusty, often very curious weapon which has belonged to his ancestors, and has slumbered peacefully all the year round under the bed. He probably knows no more of its use than what he has learnt from the history of his native province, whose inhabitants were only too often obliged to defend their lives. The sight of an old man bent with years and toil, weather-beaten and white-haired, march-



HOUSE IN APPENZELL.

ing along to the Assembly, with his sword under his arm, and his well-starched Sunday collar standing up so stiffly above his short green frock, may seem absurd ; indeed, the whole procession looks somewhat as if it belonged to the Carnival, as it moves on to the 'chair,' preceded by the band, wearing impossible uniforms, half white and half black, and crashing out the strange 'Assembly March' on their drums and fifes. Some people might be disposed to laugh at the whole proceeding, but they will soon be serious enough if they turn to the history of Appenzell, or glance at its institutions.

Hats off! These are the descendants of the brave heroes of Speicher, Häuptlingsberg, and Wolfshalde, who, undismayed by the superior numbers of the foe, wielded sword and battle-axe to such good effect that the yoke of the tyrannical masters who had so long oppressed them was shivered to atoms. This was the time of which the old chronicler spoke with admiring wonder, saying: 'It should also be known that the most strange and wonderful thing happened with regard to the Appenzellers that ever occurred in this land—in a short time they became so powerful as to drive away all the nobility.'

And then throughout the whole land there was 'one staff, one court of justice, one assembly, and one standard ;' and to this present day, the only earthly superior they recognise is their own constituted authority as embodied in the person of the 'Landammann,' or chief magistrate. Those here assembled are the mainstay of the country ; they feel themselves to be one homogeneous whole, and none are excluded from their ranks save those who can boast neither arms nor respectability.

And now the Landammann, as being the leader of the people and president of the council, mounts the platform, which is draped with the national colours of white and black, and has two mighty ancient-looking swords crossed in front of it. On his right hand stands the apparitor or herald, who puts the questions under discussion to the vote, and on the left stands the clerk of the council.

The Landammann takes off his hat, and every one present follows his example. A profound silence falls upon the assembled thousands, which shows that the people look upon the meeting as a very serious affair. Then comes the greeting to 'our trusty, faithful, and beloved fellow-countrymen,' which is heard far and wide by all the many spectators gathered around the large circle of voters. Thanks are offered to Heaven for having preserved them to meet together once more, and mention is made of the heroic deeds of their homely ancestors. This introductory act closes with general silent prayer, which never fails to make a deep impression upon strangers unaccustomed to the practice, such as the inhabitants of Outer-Rhoden, where the whole proceedings are conducted in a much more calm and dignified manner.

Then follows the business of the day, the rendering of accounts, and the elections or the voting upon important matters. And here one characteristic of the people, namely, their political ability and parliamentary tact, is most conspicuous. Almost everything goes on as evenly as in a well-ordered parliament house, and often a great deal better. To be sure the day winds up with a great drinking-bout at the best taps in Appenzell ; but town-halls have everywhere been famous for their cellars for

centuries past, and refreshment is doubly needed here, where the people have been waiting about for hours, and have had their throats parched by the raw air of the snowy mountains. Possibly the young men, who are entitled to a vote at the age of eighteen, may indulge in too much of a good thing, and perhaps the old broadsword, which figured so grandly in the morning's parade, may commit some acts of violence before the evening is over. But there is more than this. The day following is devoted to the 'Fools' Parliament,' a parody of the General Assembly, where one vies with the other in the playing of foolish practical jokes. Dancing and folly of all sorts are carried to a wild extent, and result in such misdemeanours as make one feel that the whole thing is an unworthy sequel to the solemn proceedings of the previous day. But, says the proverb, 'The General Assembly and the Fools' Parliament each has its day,' so we must shut our eyes to what we had rather not see.

The object of the General Assembly of course is to insure the common weal, and the officers there elected have to do with the whole State; but each separate parish or community is also at liberty to take measures for its own exclusive well-being. Each is its own master, and as each has been permitted to pursue the path of progress without interference from its neighbours, a noble spirit of emulation has been evoked. All are ready to make sacrifices for the public good, and the working of the whole system has been such as to bring about brilliant results in every department of the Government. Most of the offices are honorary, and bring in little or nothing, so that they offer no temptation to those who are greedy

of gain, and many occasions of strife are thereby avoided. The administration of justice, and, in fact, everything, is ordered, settled, and arranged as in a family, and a meeting of the authorities is like a family council. Every native and every Swiss citizen who may have settled in the canton is eligible for office, provided he have attained the age of eighteen, and have received regular religious instruction. None are excluded but the disreputable and those who do not bear arms; but there are certain patriarchal laws which provide that father and son, brothers, father-in-law and son-in-law, uncle and nephew, may not both have a seat and vote in the administration of the community or in the communal court of justice at the same time.

The administration consists of 'captains and councillors,' who are elected from among the parishioners, and their number must not exceed twenty-one, nor fall short of seven. When there is no special court, they have authority to pronounce sentence and to punish lesser offences; and on such occasions they wear the solemn old-fashioned mantle as a badge of office. Formerly, according to ancient custom, the apparitor who delivered up the prisoner asked for an advocate for him, and if his request were granted he chose one from the bench of justices. But the delinquent's friends, relations, and pastor were also allowed to plead for him. According to an old decree of the fifteenth century, they had a right to ask, and the justices power to grant, an alteration or mitigation of the penalty, even were the sentence one of death.

There is no imposing apparatus of judges, counsel, barristers, all looking as stiff as the traditions

of red tape can make them. One man holds a pen, he being the clerk of the commune, and he discharges the same duty when a special tribunal is appointed, the latter consisting of from five to

eleven members, whose sole qualification is that they are worthy men.

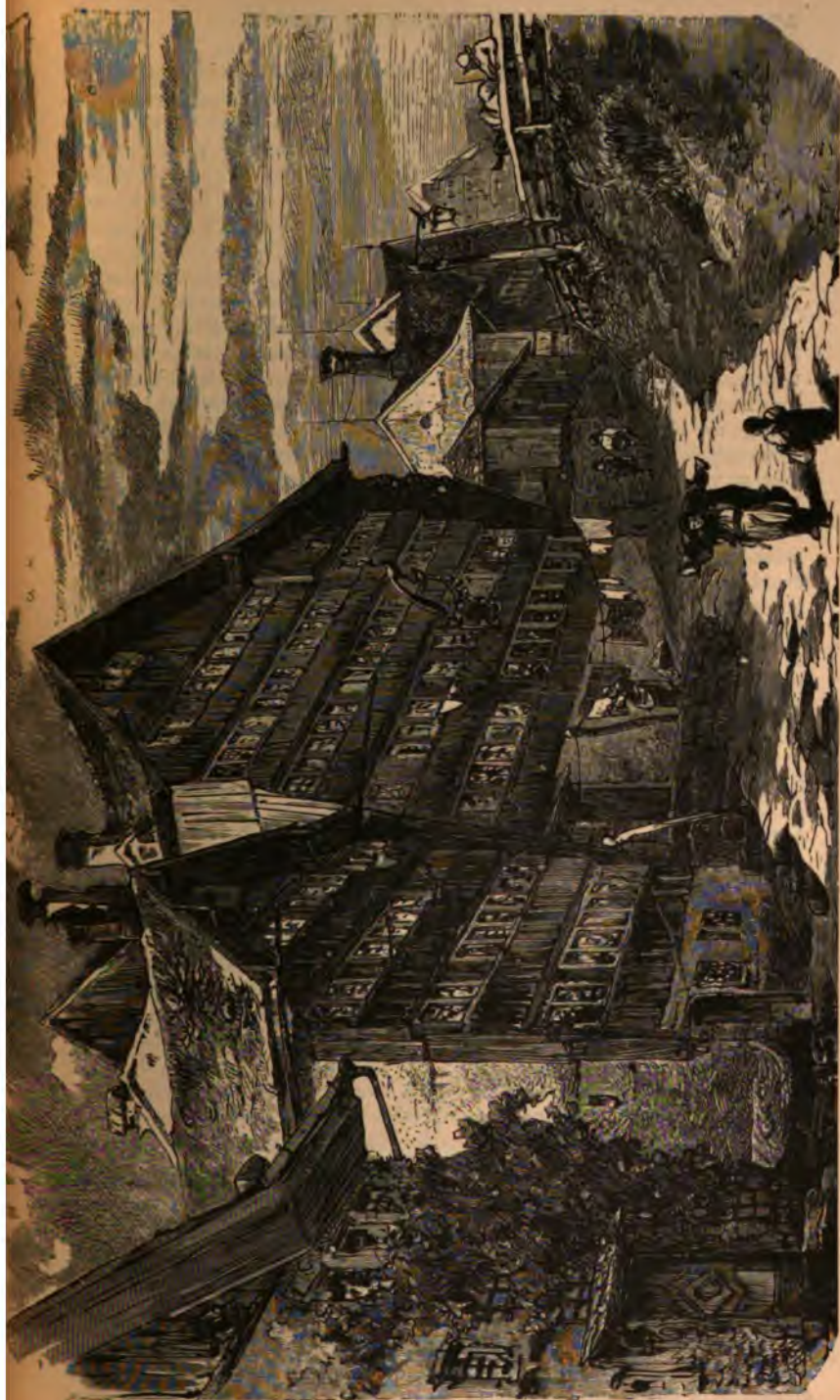
Other functionaries are the 'Ehegäumer,' among whom are the pastor of the parish and the



WILDKIRCHLI.

two 'captains,' and their business is to keep watch over the habits and conduct of the people. They advise, warn, or call them to account, and keep husbands and wives, parents and children, up to their respective duties one towards the other. Jurists may

smile and shrug their shoulders; and certainly the little canton of Appenzell would find no place in their great schemes of legislation, for its laws have grown out of the peculiar habits and customs of its population, and are the outcome of its struggle for independence



TIMBER HOUSES IN HEIDEN.

and autonomy. Its administration may not be altogether free from certain knotty excrescences; but that is rather an advantage than otherwise, and it will last so much the longer, as beneath these knots there is a thoroughly sound and healthy stem.

At Gais, a place of universal resort for the whey-cure, people will find all the charms of home, combined with all the advantages of a sojourn abroad. At the fine inns, dedicated respectively to the Ox, Lamb, and Crown, you may have every comfort, as well as warm goats' whey brought direct from the Alps every morning. There are easy walks in the neighbourhood, such as that to Starkenmühle, which is much frequented; and there are delightful views from the Hohe Wiese and somewhat unpoetical 'Hog's-back.' Those who are desirous of writing an historical poem will make a pilgrimage to the Chapel of Stoss, where four hundred Appenzellers once inflicted a sanguinary defeat upon twelve hundred well-armed Austrians. One pretty spot is called Freundschaftsitz, 'the Friends' Seat,' and other noteworthy places in the neighbourhood are Klausenbühl, Hohe Kelle, and Guggei. These walks are within the reach even of the invalid; but those who are more robust will don their elegant Alpine costumes, and ascend the Kamor and Hohe Kasten to Wildkirchli and the elevated pastures of the Eben- and Seealp, and will return home in the evening, bringing with them lovely bouquets of Alpine flowers for the ladies, unless, indeed, the latter have preferred to gather them for themselves.

But of all these various resorts we must give the palm to Weissbad, which nestles in the most charming of shady green nooks at

the foot of the Säntis, where the three small torrents of Bärenbach, Schwendibach, and Weissbach unite to form the river Sitter, which is said to have received its name (*sit ter una*, or *sitruna*) from St. Gall in honour of the Blessed Trinity.

It is a very lovely spot, surrounded by green meadows, clumps and rows of shady trees, wooded hills and grand mountains at various distances, which shield the valley from the north and temper the warmth of the south wind. Numerous easy paths lead across the Alpine meadows and into the mountains, and they always afford abundance of pleasure and entertainment, being much frequented by healthy tourists as well as invalids.

But we must not forget Heiden. Its pleasant, clean, rather imposing-looking houses may be seen from the other side of Lake Constance; and when we have reached the elevated plateau upon which the village stands, we may let our delighted eyes wander at will over the lake, among the mountains of Tyrol, and the ranges of the Liechtenstein and Vorarlberg, over the forest of Bregenz, in and out the mountains of Glarus, and on to the distant Rigi and Mont Pilat. Immediately round about everything looks green and pleasant, and the hilly canton of Appenzell lies outspread beneath us, dotted all over with its white houses, either standing singly or gathered together in clusters and villages. These scattered cottages seem to justify the tradition that the devil was once flying over this neighbourhood with a sackful of houses, and when he had reached the top of the Säntis he tore a hole in the sack, and so by degrees dropped all the houses in the canton of Appenzell, where they have ever since remained, scattered one

here and another there, without the least order or design. The 'Wild Chapel,' or Wildkirchlein, as it is called, must surely have dropped out of the sack at the same time. How else could it have got into its present position, in the midst of a thicket of Alpine roses on the face of a steep precipice?

Leaving Weissbad, we wend our way across the sloping green meadows of the Valley of Schwend, and ascend the fragrant mountain-pastures where the snow-white goats are feeding; and as we gaze from the Bodmen Alp at the steep and ever steeper wall of rock which rises perpendicularly to such a tremendous height before us, we may well wonder how we shall ever reach the top. But up we must go, for on the face of this wall hangs the Wildkirchlein, the object of our expedition, and upon it or behind it stretches the famous pasturage called the Ebenalp. This precipitous and inaccessible ridge of rock is the most easterly outpost of that one of the three ranges of the Säntis which lies farthest to the north, and forms the throne of the hoary monarch. It stands in an isolated position, being completely cut off from the 'realm of the Säntis' by an abrupt precipice. As we wander on among the trees and shrubs, enjoying the calm beauty of the scene, and looking at the sweet Alpine flowers which grow among the fallen *débris*, we hardly notice the height to which we have ascended, until, on halt-

ing for a moment and turning round, we see to our astonishment that the wood on our left has disappeared in a deep hollow, and the houses at the bottom of the valley look like the dwellings of pigmies, while above them rises a towering line of rocky cliffs, similar to that which we are ascending. These heights, called the Sigleten, are the gigantic advanced guard of the middle Säntis range, which culminates in the Altmann peak in the west. Between them and the Ebenalp block, deep down at the bottom of the valley, lies a calm dark-green lake called the Seealpsee, which reflects the tops of the trees which clothe the mountains on either side, and the bright green meadows of the Meglisalp.

The view to the left is so grand and lovely at the same time, that it would almost lead us to forget the object of our excursion, which is beckoning to us exactly overhead. And yet we shall see something still more grand and sublime when we reach the Ebenalp. As we mount the narrow pathway scratched in the rocks, we ask involuntarily, 'Who was the first man who trod this path, and who conceived the bold idea of building a chapel up yonder?' He must surely have been a man of simple piety, or else he was full of the faith which animated the builders of our grand cathedrals, before which the faithless nineteenth century stands and shakes its head in astonishment.



LAKE OF THE SERALP.

[See page 271.]

HUSHED UP.

BY A. DE FONBLANQUE,
AUTHOR OF 'A TANGLED SKIN,' 'BAD LUCK,' ETC.

THE verdict at the coroner's inquest was that the deceased—Edward Fletcher-Baldwyn—came to his death by the accidental bursting of a certain gun. That the said gun was fired by the deceased; but for what purpose, or at what object, there was no evidence to show.

A London jury would probably have gone out of their way to censure the owner of the gun for allowing the charge to rust into it, and for leaving it where any one ignorant of its condition could get possession of it; but this jury was a country jury, who found what the coroner told them to find; and this coroner was one of those wise men who do not go seeking after things which are likely to make trouble. And really there was no one to blame except the unfortunate, who was now beyond the reach of censure. A lodger in the farmhouse where the fatal accident happened, he had no business with that gun. The place where it hung was out of his domain—was not even in the same building which he inhabited. No one had spoken to him of any gun. Nevertheless he had discovered the neglected weapon, and on the day of his death (without saying a word to any one) had taken it up to his room, had opened the window, and fired. That is all.

This took place at Elberon Farm, then in the occupation of Mr. James Byles, in the county of York, on the last day of the

year 1870, about four o'clock on a fine bright frosty evening.

Most of the witnesses examined at the inquest spoke of two reports in quick succession; thus contradicting slightly the evidence of Farmer Byles, who was almost positive that the gun had only one charge in it when it was put away. The theory generally accepted was that he had made a mistake; that both barrels were loaded, and that the deceased had either fired them both, or else that the one first fired had exploded the other.

When the reports were heard, and the farmer's family ran up to see what had happened, they found the door locked. The only answers that came to their knocking and questions were some feeble moans.

Then they forced the door, and found their lodger speechless, with a terrible wound on the temple, caused apparently by a fragment of the lock of the burst gun. His right hand was blown almost off. He lived—that is to say, he breathed—for about four hours; but he never regained consciousness.

From the nature of his injuries it was evident that the gun had not gone off unexpectedly. It had been fired from the shoulder, and with deliberation; for the eye had been brought over the breech, and close to it. The charge had of course scattered so widely, that it was not even possible to say in what direction he had aimed. What

could he have aimed at? The Coroner was right. There was no evidence to show. The shooting season—now almost over—had no charms for him, and he was certainly not the sort of man to utilise the close of a fine day by opening his window to kill something. On the contrary, he had an almost morbid horror of taking life. He would not eat poultry, because (as he said) he might have seen the raw material of his dinner 'walking about,' and hated the idea that it should be slaughtered for him. There was a stream, full of excellent trout, within a quarter of a mile of the farm; but he never would fish, or taste the spoils of others' sports, for similar reasons. He had seen the speckled beauties flashing over the shallows, or leaping in the quiet pools, on the banks of which he often loved to sit and muse, although the weather was not always suitable for such outdoor meditations. He was impatient over the slightest cruelty to animals. Could such a man have shot at some wretched sparrow on the road for the mere pleasure of destruction? Had he fired out of the childish love for making a noise, or was it a practical joke?

'Well,' said Mr. Byles, the farmer, when the latter proposition was put to him, 'it might have been, for he was in high spirits that day, higher than he'd been in ever since he came. We'd been teasing him at dinner, telling him he mustn't go about, lest he'd see something he might have to eat, and maybe he thought he'd give us a start.'

Subsequently the farmer stated, as his opinion, that the poor gentleman was evidently 'off his head,' and when asked why he had not told the coroner, replied by another query:

'What was the use? The inquest was held to see if anybody was to blame. No one was to blame. If the deceased had wanted to shoot himself, he would have held the gun very differently. It was just an accident, so why hurt the feelings of the family by suggesting insanity?'

Thus Mr. Byles; and thus the reader will surmise that he was a cut above the average farmer, and be correct in his presumption.

The inquest was attended by Mr. Hugh McDonnell, the brother-in-law of the deceased, who also took possession of his luggage (the greater part of which had been purchased since his arrival at the farm), and superintended the removal of the corpse. One curious fact in the case, which had escaped the attention of the coroner, was that the deceased had all his clothes and effects packed up as though he were going away directly. But he had said nothing to his host about leaving; on the contrary, he had led him to believe that he would remain over New Year's day.

Soon after the funeral Mr. McDonnell returned, accompanied by the widow, who desired all possible details of her late husband's life and death, which affectionate curiosity was gratified to the utmost. It would be wearisome to give the result, with all its questions, answers, and interruptions, therefore I will condense it into narrative.

'I saw him first,' said Farmer Byles, 'on the road about six miles from here when I was driving home from Clitheroe on the 9th of last October. It was a very wet day, and he seemed weary. He was sitting on his bag by the side of the road, and looked up at me as I came along in a sort of dazed way, like a man that had lost himself. I asked him if I

could give him a lift the way he was going. He laughed, and said it didn't matter which way he went, and so got in.

'As we drove along he told me he hadn't been well, had overworked himself, and wanted to find some quiet place where he could stay for a month or two and have nothing to bother him. Now we often have gentlemen stopping at the farm in the summer time for the sake of the trout-fishing, and so I told him we could board and lodge him if he liked. He thanked me, but did not seem to take to the idea till he saw the house and heard we had no neighbours and were a good way from any town. Then he jumped at it.

"The very place," he said, half to himself, "for hiding."

"Hiding?" said I, getting a little suspicious.

"Don't be alarmed," said he; "there is hiding and *hiding*, and seeking and *seeking*, too. I should be rather glad to find a policeman in your parlour; and as for money, I don't think I owe a shilling in the world, and I suppose this" (producing a roll of bank-notes) "will pay you."

'There was something very taking in his manner, and I soon felt ashamed of my doubts.

'At first he was the best company I ever knew. If he had been my own son come home from abroad after a long absence, he could not have been more glad and cheery and pleased with everything; interesting himself in all we did about the farm and that, and sending into town for all sorts of things for us as presents, till we were afraid to mention what we would like. Gradually, as Christmas came along, he got more quiet; spent more and more of his time alone in his own room; became very nervous, starting at every sound along the road; and

I tell you candidly, if he had not let us know (in confidence) who he was, and we had found out that his story was true, we should have got rid of him, for he behaved just like a man who had committed some crime and was hiding from justice. Why did I not write to his family? I said he told us who he was in *confidence*. He told us that part of his troubles were family troubles, and we believed him. But the most extraordinary thing was this: he said he knew that he had become nervous and disagreeable, begged our pardon if he had made our Christmas dull, and asked us to bear with him for a little longer, as he would be himself again on the 1st of January. He said that was his birthday as well as New Year's-day, and promised we should keep it in style. And he meant what he said; for he had ordered a hamper of champagne, and no end of cakes and toys for the young ones. He was to complete his thirty-fourth year on the last day of December, and he never saw it out. On the very day of his death he picked up his former good spirits, and the last thing I saw of him he was snow-balling with our children in the front orchard.'

At this point Mr. McDonnell interposed, speaking to the widow,

'That would be about half-past twelve o'clock.'

Her only answer was a deep sigh.

'He broke away from them suddenly,' the farmer went on, 'and ran off to his room.'

'Did he tell your children why he left them? Did he say if he had seen any—anything?' asked McDonnell.

'I don't think so. They took no notice of him. He was often like that.'

A good deal of what followed is not necessary for the purposes of this narrative. It appeared to satisfy the persons immediately interested, and the day came for their departure.

But what brought satisfaction to them planted a vague suspicion in the breast of Farmer Byles. It struck him that they knew some things which he had not told them, and which were not in the evidence taken at the inquest. That observation about half-past twelve o'clock, for example. The children had not fixed any exact time; they only said it was before dinner. Not much in this of itself, but put together with other remarks it made the good man uncomfortable. He became more and more uncomfortable when he discovered that Mr. McDonnell had been seen driving a gig on the road near the farm on the 31st of December, that he had called at a cottage about six miles farther on, and had left it at an hour which would account for his re-passing the house on his return about the time of the accident.

In short he had driven by at half-past twelve, when Baldwin had suddenly broken off his game with the little folks; so McDonnell must have *heard* the explosions at any rate, as he returned (for there was no other road back to the place where he had hired the gig he drove) at four.

And yet he had come to the inquest full of surprise and grief, had asked questions as though the scene were new to him, and held his tongue whilst the discussion as to one report or two was going on. Why did he inquire if his wife's brother had seen 'any—*anything* from the orchard?' He had evidently started to say *anybody*. Had the dead man seen and recognised him? What could have been his motive

for concealing his first visit? The visit itself turned out to be a lawful one. In his capacity as an attorney he had come to take the evidence (in a right-of-way case) of a very old woman, who had left the neighbourhood of London (where the action arose) to live with her grandson in Yorkshire. This latter received the lawyer, and saw him off; but some cattle business of his own at Hull took him away from home about the same time. So he never heard of the accident or read an account of the inquest till he returned. If he had known all about it he would not have connected McDonnell with it in any way; but when he recognised him at Elberon Farm, greatly to Byles's surprise, and explained when and where they had become acquainted, the latter's suspicions grew apace.

Then he thought of that second report. When there was no one to accuse it had not mattered how many barrels were loaded; but now? What if one of those reports had been a shot fired at his lodger? What if he had seized that gun in self-defence?

Very cautiously and as he thought kindly, Farmer Byles broke the subject to Mrs. Fletcher-Baldwyn, who took up Mr. McDonnell's defence with a warmth which added to the Yorkshireman's honest doubts. The deceased had died intestate, and the bulk of his property went to his sister and her children. Well, here was the man directly benefited by his death acting in the most suspicious manner; and here was the widow (who from affluence was plunged almost into poverty) defending him—defending one who was certainly about to deprive her of her home, and perhaps had committed murder to do so.

Farmer Byles made Mr. McDonnell understand very plainly

that if he did not give him a satisfactory explanation of his conduct in private he would have to offer one before a magistrate in open court. Mr. McDonnell became greatly agitated at the threat, and then tried to pooh-pooh the suspicions by which it was prompted. This only strengthened them. Indeed things went so far that doors were locked, a horse saddled, and a labourer called from his work to ride into the next town for a policeman.

'Anything but that!' cried the widow to her supposed accomplice. 'We must trust him; and, O sir' (turning to the farmer), 'you will keep our terrible secret—you will respect the memory of the dead?'

'I tell you frankly,' Byles replied, 'there's many besides me that are asking questions.'

'Then it must all come out!' gasped the lady, wringing her hand.

'I expect it must,' growled Byles.

* * * * *

'You would not believe a word I said,' McDonnell began, 'if I were to place before you the chain of causes which led to my poor brother-in-law's death. He must unwind it himself.'

'Himself!' exclaimed the farmer.

'Yes. It is contained in a part of his diary which I found in his valise.'

'And secreted from the coroner?'

'And secreted from the coroner. When you have read it, you will know why; and will not, I hope, blame me. But I did not bring it here. Come home with us—I am sure Mrs. Fletcher-Baldwyn will second this suggestion—as our friend and guest. As for me, you can come also as a constable, if

you like, and not let me out of your sight till I have satisfied you that I am in no way to blame.'

So Mr. Byles, like an honest bulldog, went with them, and read the diary of the late Fletcher-Baldwyn, from the 4th of February 1865 to the 31st of December 1870, from the day after his return from the West Indies (where he had been employed, until his father's death made him head of the firm in England) down to his own mysterious end.

This again I must edit, so to speak, leaving out all that is not connected with the main points before us.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF EDWARD FLETCHER-BALDWIN.

Feb. 4, 1865. I dreamt the same thing twice on my passage home, but never gave it a second waking thought till to-day. I often repeat foolish dreams. I dream I am dressing for some engagement and cannot find my boots; when I have got them, I miss my coat, and so on. Again, I fancy I am a boy once more, riding a pony (long since gathered to his fathers) through a stream divided in two by an island in which a huge oak-tree grows. I can shut my eyes now and see the shallow water rushing over the golden sand, and the long green flag-weeds waving in the deeps. And yet there is no such place—at least no such place that I know of. I suppose dreams come reflected from dreams, just as they come from realities; but how about the *first* dream of an *unreality*? The reality is always distorted or confused in the dream. It is only the *unreal* that comes back, time after time, clear and consistent with itself. The dream which

comes back so strangely to me now was repeated incident for incident, and word for word, from itself.

I was walking along a road through some heath or common, evidently in England, and the sun was setting. My way was uphill, a rather steep hill, and the surroundings somehow gave me the idea that I should get a view of the sea from the top. I pushed on, and became aware of a man standing on the summit, with his back towards me. He was dressed all in black, and the red glow beyond him threw his figure out very distinctly against the horizon. When I was about to pass him, he turned round suddenly, and stretched out his hand as though we were old friends, and he had been waiting for me by appointment. It seemed to me that this was quite natural, and we shook hands without a word. Then he took my arm, and in a tone as though one would say, 'Come and take a stroll,' to an intimate, he said, '*Come, and I will show you your grave.*'

Again his conduct seemed reasonable, and I suppose I should have walked on with him for miles if necessary. But the scene changed; we entered a house, a square, flat-fronted, red-brick, blue-tiled, ugly, and respectable mansion, such as you may find in the outskirts of any country town, and which is generally occupied by the doctor or the leading attorney, if it is not a boarding-school. We passed through the usual oak-floored hall into the usual dining-room, with its usual Turkey carpet, its usual formal sideboard (with the usual portrait of the owner over it), and the usual array of leathern-seated chairs drawn up in hollow squares around the walls. But where the table ought to have been, with its usual red

and black cover, was something very unusual.

There stood a tomb!

A marble tomb, rising out of the floor, half above it, and half below, on the slab of which was this inscription:

Sacred to the Memory
OF

EDWARD FLETCHER-BALDWIN
OF CAULDERWOLDE,
WHO DIED

December 31st, 1870,

Aged 34 Years.

Now the man on the hill had said, 'Come, and I will show you *your* grave;' but this one was that of some one else. My name is Fletcher, not Fletcher-Baldwyn, and I have nothing to do with Caulderwolde, whatever that is, or wherever it may be. I never heard of such a place. Thus I reasoned in my dream, and turned round to ask for an explanation; but the man was gone, and the house was on fire, and the shock produced by the double surprise woke me.

Dreaming this the second time, it seemed to come with all the force of novelty. I had no knowledge of what was to happen first, or what would follow. I woke in suspense at the end, as before, and, as I have already written, did not give it a second waking thought.

I landed at Southampton yesterday evening, took the first train for London, and arrived at our (I may now say *my*) house so tired that I went straight to my room, begging Emma to make my excuses to McDonnell when he should arrive.*

This morning I was up as usual,

* This gentleman was engaged to Miss Emma Fletcher, and was expected from Manchester (where he then lived) by the last train. He was personally unknown to the writer of this diary until the day after his arrival in England.

early, and made for the breakfast-room. When my hand was on the lock of the door, and before I had opened it, before I saw that there was a man dressed all in black standing with his back to me on the hearth-rug, with the red glow of the fire beyond him, my dream flashed back! I knew he would turn round and hold out his hand as though we were old friends, and he had been waiting for me.

I knew I should accept his salutation as quite natural, and that we should shake hands without a word. And so it was. He turned exactly as I expected, and *I saw the man who had shown me my grave in my dream!*

This is what makes me recall it, and really there is something very odd so far.

Feb. 5. After reading over what I wrote last night, it strikes me that there isn't anything so very odd after all. It is nonsense to think that I saw McDonnell *before* I opened the door. It was his black back and the fire-glow which put me in mind of that silly dream; and then, when he turned round, I fancied his face was like that of the man on the hill. Now this is the way to test it. If I had asked myself ten minutes before our meeting what the face of my dream-man was like, could I have described it? I could not. That settles the point. How simple these 'odd' things become when you examine them! McDonnell was in mourning for my poor father out of respect for us. He was warming his hands at the fire because it was cold, and consequently had to turn his back to the door. We had never met; but he knew I was the only other man in the house, and I knew he was the only guest. It would have been absurd if two future

brothers-in-law had stood on the ceremony of an introduction, especially when one of them was in his own house, and the other his guest. Of course we didn't talk about graves, and of course we shook hands without a word. He says that I am not at all the sort of man he expected to find in Emma's brother. The truth is she wanted me to make a favourable impression on her lover, and therefore did not flatter me in her descriptions. She played the same game on him, and we are mutually disappointed — agreeably. This shows that he has not been dreaming about *me*.

Feb. 11. I have had that dream again, and the face of the man on the hill is McDonnell's. Have I *made* it thus by thinking, or was it always so?

Feb. 28. Things are getting decidedly 'odd' again. I asked McDonnell if he knew any place called Caulderwolde. He did not; but Emma, who was writing some letters at the time, caught the sound and answered me. From what she said, it seems that a distant relative of ours, Sir Jasper Baldwyn, has a grand house of that name in Kent; that his elder son has deeply offended him by a low marriage, and that the second, who is in the army, has been sent for to be made the heir. If this be the Captain Baldwyn whom I met at Barbadoes, he has a beautiful young wife and two fine boys already. Strange that neither of us should have known of the relationship! I suppose he was too proud to acknowledge a *trader* for his cousin. If it were not for him I might possibly inherit Caulderwolde. I wonder if his name is Edward Fletcher? *Edward Fletcher-Baldwyn of Caulderwolde!* It sounds well. I think I should make a good

county gentleman. Caulderwolde *ought* to be a fine place. Stop! If I were Fletcher-Baldwyn of Caulderwolde I should have only about five years to live, according to the dream. I am to die on the 31st of December 1870, aged 34. Odd that whatever is answerable for that vision should have fixed upon the 31st of December—the day before my birthday, the last day of my 34th year that is to be—as the date of my death! Suppose people held their lives for a fixed term as they hold their houses, what would become of us? I think we should go mad. The idea of counting the years and the months and the hours and the moments at the last! Ugh, it makes my blood run cold!

Sept. 16. Just returned from a visit to my cousin Sir Jasper. Caulderwolde *is* a fine place. Emma and I are to spend Christmas there, when Captain Baldwyn and his family come home. Sir Jasper has taken quite a fancy to us. Good old fellow! he is so proud of his race, and so pleased to have them about him, it is a thousand pities that that fool of an elder son has disgraced it. The idea of losing Caulderwolde for a painted vixen out of a music-hall! I would give up—Why can I not shake off the recollection of that idiotic dream which buries me in the middle of a gentleman's dining-room? Can anything be more absurd? It has come back to me, I suppose, because the way to Caulderwolde over Easterham Chart is something like the road in dreamland on which I met McDonnell's double. By the bye, that person does not improve upon acquaintance. He is cold and hard, and I don't think he is sincere. I wonder at Emma's love for such a fellow. I'm sure he is unscrupulous and vindictive.

Dec. 20 (at Caulderwolde). I can scarcely write for excitement. My God, how horribly strange all this is! We were invited here to rejoice with Sir Jasper over the return of the Baldwyns, and we have come to break to him the news of their loss. All of them—husband, wife, children—at one blow! Forty souls, including thirteen saloon passengers, were saved from the sinking ship; why should they—why should *all* of them—have perished! And that hateful McDonnell, who brought the news, said this morning as we were starting, 'If you play your cards well, you will have—Caulderwolde.' It is very probable now that I shall; but why must this cold-blooded ruffian say so? What business is it of his? I suppose he thinks I shall settle something handsome on Emma. He is mistaken. I've already told her I don't approve of the man. Why my poor father sanctioned their engagement is a mystery to me. I can't forbid her marrying him, but they'll get no help from me—Caulderwolde or no Caulderwolde—or from Sir Jasper either, if I have any influence over him.

Jan. 13, 1866. It is all very fine for Sir Jasper to say that he does not like his nearest male relative (he ignores the existence of his son) to be connected with trade, but I'm not going to fall between two stools. He may live another twenty years; may marry, and have other children. I'm not going to sell the business at a loss on the chance of his making me his heir. He ought to state distinctly what his intentions are. I will tell him to-morrow that I cannot afford to stay any longer away from my *trade*. That will make him speak out.

Nov. 30. Just returned from the funeral and reading of the will

which makes me master of Caulderwolde. It is extraordinary how true my instincts are. I felt that McDonnell was a viper, and now I know he is. He may deny it all day, but I am convinced it is his work; for I often told poor old Sir Jasper that I had an objection to change my name. Fletcher is just as good a name as Baldwyn. I was a fool to let him (McDonnell, I mean) be employed at all in drawing the will. I might have been sure he would make some mischief. I don't care so much about the reversion of the Caulderwolde estate going to my sister and her children in case I die without issue, because that is so very remote. I shall marry now, of course. But what I hate is to be obliged to take another name. It seems as though I were fulfilling that idiotic dream just as I had begun to forget all about it. Never mind. The thing has to be taken altogether, of course. I am (or soon shall be) Edward Fletcher-Baldwyn of Caulderwolde in the regular and natural course of events; but this is no reason why I should die on the 31st of December 1870, and be buried in the middle of a Turkey carpet.

March 1, 1867 (at Geneva). Wrote to Emma, declining to stand godfather to her boy. She chose between me and that creature McDonnell, and must abide by her choice. Wrote also to Spinks, saying I shall not return to Caulderwolde this year. Before the place was mine I thought it beautiful; and the moment I got it I hated it. Those roads over the Chart are so dreary. Received a letter from the Hatherns. They will be here on Friday. I wonder if Sibyl Hathern *really* cares anything for that puppy Calverly?

June 23. Answer to the conundrum propounded in my journal of March 1st—*she doesn't*. She cares for me—for *me*, as I stand in ten pounds'-worth of clothes, not knowing that I am a man of fortune. Shall I play the Lord of Burleigh, and take her third class to my 'castle' in a cotton gown? I am afraid that the prosaic custom of settlements has put these romantic surprises out of date. I shall have to talk settlements with old Hathern tomorrow. A foolish letter from Spinks, saying that Dr. Massinger's house has been burned down to the ground. I have not the least recollection of the doctor, or his house either. It is not on my land; so why should Spinks bother me about it? I believe he writes for the pleasure of writing.

June 30. By the merest chance I find that these Hatherns—all of them, Sibyl included—have made a dead-set at me, well knowing who I am and what I am worth. Sibyl let it out quite by accident. When she was a little girl she used to visit near Caulderwolde, and she knows the country roads better than I do. And I thought her the most true and simple-hearted of women! Mercenary little witch! Bah, they are all alike! Spinks wants me to take shares in a new burying-ground they are going to make, as the old churchyard is to be condemned. If I put three hundred pounds in the Caulderwolde Necropolis Company, I can have an 'allotment,' as well as a dividend out of other people's graves, for my money. Not a very cheerful investment; but I suppose I ought to make it.

July 2. I have been trying to harden my heart against Sibyl, but I cannot. Besides, her excuses are difficult to answer. I

had told her that I hated Caulderwolde; so why, she asks, should she have spoken of it, and so raised a disagreeable subject? She was so indignant, and looked so handsome when I taxed her with insincerity, that I half repented what I had done before she answered. What a fool a man in love can be made! I went into the room resolved to break off the engagement, and I begged her pardon on my knees before I left it! I shall always think that the old people 'ran cunning'; but I'm not going to marry *them*.

Aug. 26, 1868. I wonder why I ever took a dislike to Caulderwolde? Sibyl says we once had quite a quarrel over it. I suppose I must have had some cause—good, bad, or indifferent. It could not have been a very strong one, though. I wish I could find my diary for 1867; I should then be able to recall what was passing in my mind at the time. All I can now remember is that the place seemed very gloomy after old Sir Jasper's death, and that I went abroad for a month, and stayed away two years.

Caulderwolde, thanks to Sibyl's taste and management, is a very different place from what it was before our marriage; and then the baby—I beg his pardon, *the heir*! What a change the advent of that morsel of humanity has wrought! I must hunt up my old diaries, and take a look back into my old life, if only to measure by contrast how happy I am, and how thankful I should be.

Mem. To see Spinks about those cottages at Fenny Londen. They are in a horrid state. Do low places make dirty people? or would low people turn any place into a pest-hole? I shall try to decide this point by pulling down those cottages, building

others on the hill-side, and giving the people a chance of living decently.

Mem. No. 2. That Sibyl is not to go amongst them till the change is made.

Aug. 28. My warning came too late; my good intentions were too long deferred. O God! to think that it is all my own fault! To think that the punishment for my criminal carelessness about the poor folk committed to my charge has fallen on my innocent wife and child! It is horribly unjust. Why should I escape—I, who am responsible for the outbreak of this fever, if any one is—and my poor tender Sibyl be stricken? Why should the pest she brought home from her mission of love have passed on to the boy, and not to me? There *can* be no Providence if such things may be. All is chance!

Oct. 1. May Heaven forgive me for what I wrote on the 28th! Sibyl is better. In my agony, before the change came, I repeated that blasphemy. It was wrong from me, and she—well, she is an angel. I asked her to pray for me; she said, 'Let us pray together.' I knelt down with her dear weak burning hands between my own, and our prayers have been granted. Is this chance?

Oct. 7. The doctors have held their consultation and left. The verdict is death. He may live till daybreak. My boy, my boy!

All the above extracts have been carefully marked in the various volumes of the diaries which contained them. The widow found each in its turn for Farmer Byles, and left him to read it himself. When he had read the last, she shut the book,

and said, 'There is no more here bearing on the subject. The next entry was written in your house on a loose sheet of paper, and cannot be understood without an explanation. We lost our darling boy on the 7th of October 1868, and he was buried in the ground reserved for us in the new cemetery. His grave was one of the first made there. On the anniversary of his death we went, my husband and I (as we had often done before), to place flowers on his grave. For a long time we stood there, hand in hand, sad and silent. At last—I know not why—an old recollection came over me. "How strange," I said, "it is that some of the happiest days of my girlhood were spent on this now sad spot!"

"Did you play here before it was God's acre?" asked my husband.

"Often and often," I replied. "Don't you know that Doctor Massinger lived here before his house was burned down, and they bought the land for the cemetery?"

"I did not," he said wearily. "Spinks wrote to me about the fire, but I had no interest in the spot then. Who was Doctor Massinger?"

"I told him that he was an old friend of my father; that they had been in the army together in India, where the doctor by some lucky speculations made a small fortune; that he retired from the service, and bought Lornden Beeches, where he lived till the fire. I added that he was rather an eccentric man, who shunned general society, and held political opinions which at one time caused some scandal in the country.

"This," I explained, "is probably the reason why you did not

meet him at Caulderwolde in old Sir Jasper's time. They had a serious quarrel. I was too young at the time to know the exact cause; but it was something about a poacher, and after it they did not speak. I think my father once tried to make it up; but this does not interest you."

"Not much—not at all, except so far as it relates to you," he replied tenderly. "So you were a happy child *here*?"

"Yes," I said, "very happy. After India these cool green fields seemed like Paradise. The garden was my great delight. It extended from near that great beech to the crest of the hill. That part where the turf is so smooth and level was the lawn. The road was a good deal farther back then, and it must have been exactly where we now are that the house stood," I went on, taking my "bearings," as a sailor would say, from the position of the trees and the slope of the grass. "Yes; here ran the entrance-hall, and there, close beside where our darling sleeps, was the dining-room."

"The words were hardly out of my mouth when my husband gave a piercing shriek, and staggered, pale and trembling, against the gravestone.

"Describe that house," he gasped; "tell me exactly what it was like."

"It was an old-fashioned, formal, red-brick house," I said, "and my room—"

"There was an oak-floored hall," he interrupted, getting more and more excited, "and the dining-room was the second door on the right. It had a Turkey carpet on the floor, and a portrait over the mantelpiece."

"Why, I thought you did not know—" I began.

"Again he interrupted. "Is it

so? Is it as I have said? Was the centre of that room here—*here* where I stand—at the side of our child's grave, over the place reserved for mine?"

"I think so," was my reply.

"Do not think," he said solemnly; "be *sure*. You little imagine what may turn upon your answer. Fancy that you can rebuild the place. Here ran the hall, you say. Well, you know what a ground-plan is? Make one in your mind's eye, and tell me whereabouts the table would stand in that dining-room."

"I did as he bade me, and after as good a calculation as I could make I found that it would stand, as he said, over the place which had been selected for our last home.

"He turned aside with a deep sigh, and bade me go home alone. He had to see his agent, and would follow.

"The rest of the day and all that night he was restless and excited, but did not return to the subject of our conversation in the cemetery, except once, when I said I feared he was ill, and begged him to see the doctor. I remember now with what strange warmth he insisted that there was nothing the matter with him. Then he turned the subject with a laugh, and said, "When people shudder you say, 'Some one is walking over your grave.' Well, I walked over my own grave to-day, and a sudden spasm made me call out. Does that prove I am ill?"

"The next morning he started for London (as he said) on business; but I do not think he ever went there. He sent me a telegram from Redhill stating that he might have to go abroad, and would send me word where to write to him as soon as his plans were more settled.

"I never saw him again, and I

leave you to imagine the agony of suspense and fear in which I lived for nearly three months.

"Now, Mr. Byles, read over once more his account of that strange and wonderful dream—the dream he had never told even to me, and had almost forgotten; the dream, every portion of which, except *one*, had been fulfilled. Fulfilment of this one had become possible."

"I remember all about it," said Byles; "go on please. I don't quite see what it has to do with the shooting, though."

"This will show," replied the widow, placing a loose sheet of paper before him; "read."

He read as follows:

Elberon Farm, Oct. 12. I have been here three days in perfect peace, and have had opportunities of calm and reasonable reflection. The dream *can* be fulfilled throughout, but will it! All depends upon McDonnell, whose cursed hand is in every detail of fulfilment. He greeted me in my own house just as the man who showed me my grave had greeted me on the moor. He brought the news of the wreck, and was the first to suggest that Caulderwolde could be mine. It was through him that Sir Jasper made me change my name. When I left my wife in the cemetery I called on Spinks, and asked how that particular plot of ground came to be allotted to me. He said he had chosen it on the advice of the attorney of the company, who was very friendly, and recommended it as the best place, on account of its being on high land, and bearing the finest trees about. I asked the name of that attorney, and of course found it was McDonnell! I had introduced him to business at Caulderwolde when we were friends. And this

was his gratitude! *He showed me my grave.* Not precisely as in the dream, for that would be impossible, but as nearly as he could, I being alone. He will go on; I have a rooted presentiment that he will go on, and send me to that grave, if I give him the merest chance. My only hope is to hide somewhere where he cannot find me till the 31st of December has passed, and for that purpose I am here. Sometimes I think that my best plan would be to seek him out, and kill him in self-defence. It would be self-defence, morally and legally too. My boy is dead! The scoundrel's wife has the reversion of Caulderwolde under Sir Jasper's will, if I die without issue. I could prove motive. I could show how he has followed me up, step by step. He has dreamed that dream himself, I am confident he has, but I could not prove that. No; I will hide.

Nov. 23. I have had to tell Byles who I am, so as not to be turned out. He will keep my secret. I cannot write up my diary regularly as I used. I suppose it is because I have not my proper book. I shall go home on the 1st of January, when I enter on my thirty-fifth year and am safe. Then I will copy this, and fill up all I have thought. I shall remember most of what has passed through my mind, and Sibyl and I will have a good laugh over it.

Nov. 31. If the dream be true, I have just one month to live. Thirty-one days, seven hundred and forty-four hours, forty-four thousand six hundred and forty minutes. When my boy was dying we counted the hours and the minutes, but *he* did not know when he was to die. Some of my minutes have passed as I am writing. This sort of thing

will drive me mad. I must *not* think.

I am in excellent bodily health. I even sleep well; no dreams. My appetite is good, only I cannot bear the idea of things being killed for me. When I insured my life for Sibyl the doctors said that all my organs were perfect. What *can* happen?

Dec. 31. He has found me out! I have seen him! He will return and do his damnable work. I saw him drive past as I was playing with the children. And I have not even a weapon. Stay, there is that old gun in the out-house; I will pack up all my things and—

Here followed a few words so blotted as to be illegible.

'Now,' said McDonnell, 'you must hear me. I need scarcely assure you that I knew nothing of that mysterious dream, and therefore could not have aided in making its prophecy true. I did not know that my brother-in-law had left Caulderwolde. Mrs. Fletcher-Baldwyn will tell you that she made various excuses for his absence, not wishing to give rise for scandal. I went to Yorkshire purely on professional business, the nature of which you know. When I passed your farm I had not the remotest idea that he was within two hundred miles of me. As I returned, I heard a window open violently. I looked up, and saw him—saw him lean forward and take deliberate aim at me. Then came a flash, and two reports in quick succession, one louder than the other. They startled the horse I drove, and he ran away with me. That is all I know.

'What was I to do? Drive back and give my wife's brother into custody for an attempt at murder? Remember I was not

aware that the gun had burst. I did not know he was hurt till I got his widow's telegram. I had to consider what to do about *myself* only, and therefore could afford to be deliberate.

'I went home, half dazed, to think it over, and found the telegram calling me to Caulderwolde.

'I went back to Elberon as fast as steam could take me, and examined the dead man's valise for some clue to his conduct. Almost the first thing I found was that crumpled paper you have just read. This, of course, put us

upon further search. We discovered his old diaries at Caulderwolde, and they told us all.

'Now, Mr. Byles, I appeal to you as a husband whether this poor lady's feelings should be wrung by a public inquiry into this most painful case? Is it not one that may properly be hushed up?

And hushed up it was. I who tell it now break no confidence; for I have not given one real name, or place, or date, and the person who might be hurt by a successful guess at the truth has been dead for several years.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. IV.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

[The initial, central, and final letters of the Lights form three distinct but connected words.]

THEY come and they cut us most rudely, but then,
Having cut us direct, they keep coming again,
And follow us home, where we match them, for though
They may blow where they list we may list where they blow.

I.

Stone walls no prison ! Iron bars no cage !
This you may do in them I dare engage.

II.

Born at Bologna, there he carved his way,
To fame and fortune—sculpt it, one may say.

III.

Whatever this may be, I still advise,
Give it to him who best deserves the prize.

IV.

Men wiser grow, so some M.P.s, 'tis plain,
Who have been this will ne'er be this again.

V.

These oft for breakfast, sometimes too for tea,
Or dinner at a roadside inn you see.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the April Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by March the 11th.

ANSWER TO No. III. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

| | | |
|-------|---------------|----|
| 1. C | | V. |
| 2. H | I A W A T H | A |
| 3. I | D E N T I C A | L |
| 4. L | U T | E |
| 5. D | O | N |
| 6. H | A R V E S | T |
| 7. O | C T R O | I |
| 8. O | T T O M A | N |
| 9. D | U P | E |
| 10. S | I R I U | S |

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. Genesis v. 6. 5. To put on, as collar, stock, &c.
10. The dog-star.

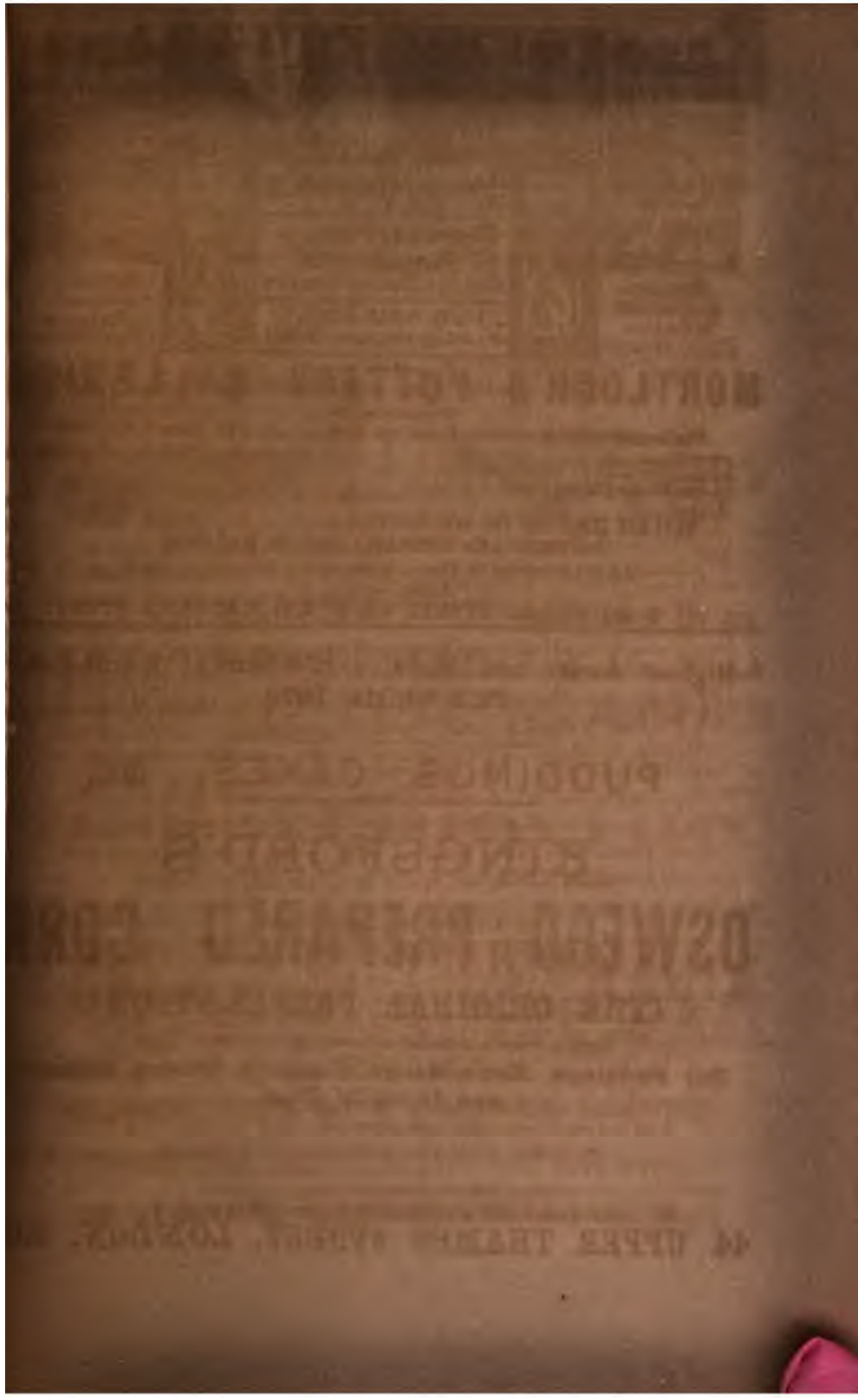
Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Acephate, Aces, Acipenser, Araba, Beatrice W., Bob Acres, Bon Gualtier, Brief, Bumpkin, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Capello, Cat & Kittens, Cats & Co., Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Crumbs, Double Elephant, Elaine, Eros, Etak, Excelsior Jack, General Buncombe, Gherkins, Gimlet-Eye, G. U. E., Hag, Hampton Courtier, Harrow Road West, H. B., Henricus, Hibernicus, Ignoramus, Incoherent, Jack, John-o'-Gaunt, Kanitbeko, Kew, Lanreath, L. E. K., Lizzie, Manus O'Toole, Mouse, Mrs. Dearhat, Mungo, Murra, Newell, Nil Desperandum, Non sine gloria, No. 2, Oban, Oberstwachmeister, Old Log, Palmyra, Pat, Patty Probit, Penton, Pip, Pud, Puss, Quill, Racer, Roe, Semie, Shaitân, Sir Hans Sloane, Squib, Tally-ho, The Snark, Thunder, Titus A. Drum, Tory, Verulam, Wee Plots, Welsh Rabbit, White Lancer, Yours truly, Yule, and one without signature—84 correct, and 136 incorrect: 220 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correct answers to No. II. from Draab and Bumfit were received too late to be credited.

The word 'Article' cannot be considered correct for the second light of No. II.

Gladys' answer to No. II. did not come to hand.





Forgetting her letter, which she still held absently in her hand, she let her thoughts go free, and walked on like a dreamer.

THE END.

LONDON SOCIETY

APRIL 1, 1891.

CRESSIDA.

By EDWARD THOMAS, Author of

MR. GILFILLAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

R. K. ARMAH.

It was on the nature of things that the arrival of strangers at Monk Orchard should be a stirring event in the chronicles of Lullingdon, which were not so run-dry at that time of year. But, when the news was every tongue-tick for the last means to earn a very cheap reputation, not only by giving a popular name, but for the appearance of these strangers on the scene, it produced an orthodox, favourable sensation, it should have taken the orthodox course. First, the news of their coming should have been brought to light. Then, before the event, the names of the new arrivals looked out in various public places, or in the event of a newspaper, to favour grown-up, so that Lullingdon should have been the scene of a reference to make up its mind as to the amount of attention due to the newcomers. Now, the whole transaction had been conducted in a thoroughly run-down and unconverted way. Lullingdon hardly knew that the place was so small till the tenants were on the eve of making the possession. They came and had been installed there for a fortnight

or more, and the Lullingdon neighbourhood was aware of their coming. Lullingdon had heard of the coming, which was the first thing that was known, and so that to make the event of the coming was the first thing that was known. The coming was the first thing that was known.

"We speak of the coming of the new arrivals, which is the first thing that is known, and so that to make the event of the coming was the first thing that was known. The coming was the first thing that was known."

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LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER VIII.

ROCKS AHEAD.

It was in the nature of things that the arrival of strangers at Monks' Orchard should be a stirring event in the chronicles of Lullington, which were apt to run dry at that time of year, Lent, when there was every temptation for Lullingtonians to earn a very cheap reputation for piety by giving no parties. But for the appearance of these strangers on the scene to produce an orthodox, favourable sensation, it should have taken the orthodox course. First, the news of their coming should have been bruited abroad

long before the event, their name known, looked out in various social dictionaries, and their exact passport to favour drawn up, so that Lullington should have ample leisure and evidence to make up its mind as to the amount of attention due to the new-comers. Now the whole transaction had been conducted in a thoroughly random and unconventional way. Lullington hardly knew that the place was let until the tenants were on the eve of coming to take possession. They came, and had been installed there for a fortnight

or more before the general neighbourhood was aware of the fact. Lullington hated the erratic, which upset all its calculations, and seemed to make the ground shaky on which it stood. It took its revenge in wholesale condemnation of erratic people, though usually alleging some other reason than their eccentricity.

'We smell a rat,' was the watchword now. Who was this widow de Saumarez? who doubtless, they charitably surmised, had private reasons—perhaps shady antecedents of some kind—for not courting notice in Lullington, the unexceptionable and pretergentee.

However, the late lamented De Saumarez was ascertained to have held a distinguished military position, the son's name appeared in the *Army List* among the officers of a crack regiment, and at last somebody turned up who knew the widow, antecedents and all, and proved her to be thoroughly *en règle*, and something more.

She was a very clever and agreeable person, though that was neither here nor there, and she had a good jointure and a charming house in London, where she gave charming dinner-parties to all the

'best' people. As for the stepson, those who knew—showing the singular moderation with which gentlemen pronounce judgment on each other, in salient contrast to the eagerness with which ladies tear each other's characters to pieces—were more reserved. He had been 'rather wild,' some one admitted considerably, who had known him in India. 'Last said, soonest mended,' was left to be inferred.

The next news was that during their first fortnight they had had relays of visitors up and down from London. Clearly, then, they were not dependent on their country neighbours for society. Could this be why they had kept aloof? Could it mean that they held their heads so high as not to care to know Lullington? What, then, could have been their object in coming to reside there? Lullington might rack its brain over this riddle for ever. It was one without an answer. Elise had had no design. She cared too little for things to trouble herself to lay long trains. She took up plans at a moment's notice, and laid them down as readily. Her ill-health had been the cause deciding her to skip a London season. Next it occurred to her that it would be a pleasant thing to take some nice country retreat for a year, and her eye had been accidentally attracted to Tom Kennedy's advertisement by its comically bad grammar. She recollected the place near Fernswold; it had taken her fancy from a distance, because it was like a French *château*; and she at once made up her mind that it was exactly the sort of thing she was in search of. It would be agreeable, too, to have Cressida for her nearest neighbour. Then the 'rather wild' Alec, who was at present in England, and on leave, might, if she made the house lively with visitors, be induced to quit

London for a while, and come down to share her villeggiatura, an additional reason in its favour, as it might keep him out of mischief, and from running through money at his present pretty appalling rate. This was a laudable motive, however, which did not strike her until after the step had been taken.

She and he had always remained on good terms by virtue of her excessive tolerance and leniency. No one who knew Alec intimately had a grain of respect for him; but respect was a feeling Elise was scarcely capable of feeling, and therefore never missed. She professed to know only two classes of people, bores and non-bores; and it was only the first she objected to have about her. She supposed he would tone down one of these days, if he lived long enough. In the mean time, he was very good-tempered and entertaining. It would be a pity to quarrel with him, and thus snap a link that might in the end draw him from his evil ways into the fold of domestic life. She could not recognise how, on the other hand, her cold, clever cynicism, her plausible effrontery, had largely helped to demoralise him.

Yes, she rather liked Alec. He was a gentleman, careful about his personal appearance, just escaping foppishness by the dare-devil touch in him that gave mettle to a languid exterior. He was slender and young-looking, and a walking illustration of the proverb concerning those who may steal the horse, yet come off scot-free. Stories of his startling irregularities went about, and scandalised all hearers, with the curious exception of those who were personally acquainted with the hero. For his looks were such a splendid piece of humbug that, though he really never made the slightest pretence to be anything but the arrant

scamp that he was, his prettiness lied for him so effectually that the usual impression he made was one of softness, almost of refinement, and he was rarely judged as severely as he deserved. So difficult was it to estimate the nature of his amiable depravity, that he was commonly put down as 'not a bad fellow,' though perhaps a little weak, and short of brain. Quite a false valuation. True, Alec might have been plucked by a fourth-form boy in almost every branch of useless knowledge—book knowledge *was* useless to him—but in society, and in his dealings with men and women, especially women, he had shown himself far from deficient, to say the least.

He had returned from his morning walk, and during lunch-time entertained his stepmother with a lively account of his adventure with the wood-nymph. Elise listened, deeply interested, and in particular was highly diverted by his attempts to describe the nymph's apparel.

'A sort of rifle-green coloured thing, very long,—I can't think how she ever got over the palings, —a big Bersagliere-like hat, also green, with the feathers all coming down on one side, and a chased silver pouch, or pocket, hanging by a chain from her waist.'

'It must have been Cressida,' rejoined Mrs. de Saumarez thoughtfully. 'I know the pocket; I got it for her in Paris.'

'Then Cressida's a deucedly pretty girl,' he returned, with a slight smile. When Alec's lips relaxed thus, it was unaccompanied by any sympathetic movement of the eyes or brow, and the effect was as if a stone mask smiled. 'Where may she come from? Does she live near? Can a fellow go and call?'

'Surely, Alec, you've heard me speak of her often—Miss Landon,

the girl I took with me to Switzerland last year.'

'Do you think she'd go to Switzerland with me this year, if I asked her?' said Alec, with some animation. 'I've half a mind to try. Really, this new salad is an uncommonly good mixture,' he remarked parenthetically; 'tell the cook I said so.'

'Now mind, Alec, I am not going to allow you to joke about my friend Miss Landon.' Alec drew a long, long face. 'It will be a blow for you, I fear; but let me tell you at once, and be sure you don't forget, Cressida Landon is engaged.'

'Thank God for that!' ejaculated Alec quietly, lifting his glass and sipping his Sauterne—as it were, drinking the good health of the *fiancé*. 'I like engaged girls best—when married women are not to be had; they know you mean nothing by all manner of infernal fooling. There's no question of "intentions," and so on.'

'I perfectly sympathise with you,' said Elise amiably; 'but still, Alec, I won't have my little Cressida teased, and her mind unsettled, now that her affections are at last engaged. Besides, she's going to marry into a bank.'

Alec exploded with laughter.

'Marriott and Marriott,—and Alleyne it will be,' resumed Elise. 'They're worth a mint of money, you know, and as safe as the Pyramids. Think of that.'

'Confound those money-grubbing speculators,' laughed Alec gaily; 'they spoil the girl-market for family and finish.'

'Well, the *fiancé*, Mr. Norbert Alleyne, is a really nice, steady, honest, sober, industrious young man' (with a stress on each adjective); 'he has been attached to her for years, and plays remarkably well upon several instruments.'

'Heard at last, I suppose, by

reason of his importunity or his organ-grinding,' said Alec. 'In every way he has got the start of me, from your account.'

'Having faithfully discharged the duties of his office as suitor for so long, it is only fair he should get promoted, is it not?' said Elise cheerfully. 'At any rate Cressida has consented, and a very good thing it is for all parties.'

'Have you seen the fellow?'

'No; he's away now for a few months before the wedding comes off in the summer.'

'What a chance!' said Alec, jestingly. 'Now I—'

'Alec,' Elise interrupted him, lifting her forefinger warningly, 'I forbid you to say anything more. I shall not allow you to meddle with Miss Landon. She has made up her mind to do a wise thing, and it would be cruel to interfere. If I feel I cannot trust you, my remedy is simple—I will not ask her here.'

'Am I so dangerous, then?' said Alec, looking up at her across the table.

Elise laughed. Yes, Alec was dangerous, like squirrels with soft fur, pretty heads, and sharp teeth. There was something of the untameable animal in him, the creature with no feelings worth mentioning to be worked upon. That prepossessing harmless-looking person of his was a gift of the freakish gods. Nothing in his lineaments or expression that told tales of his worse than frittered life. He enjoyed a happy immunity from remorse, anxiety, ambition, and care; all of which had failed to put a wrinkle on his straight white forehead or grizzle his dark hair; and the worst that dissipation could do seemed to be to impart to his countenance that slightly worn look that was rather becoming than otherwise, redeem-

ed it from effeminacy, and made him look interesting in the eyes of the London and Lullington maidens.

Elise thought all this to herself as she regarded him coolly; then shaking her head in reproof, she replied,

'Alec, you are the most fatuous man I ever had the amusement of knowing. Let me tell you that if girls knew you in the slightest degree, if they could even guess what a reprobate you are—'

'They'd be madder after you than they are already.' This was the sequel, the very reverse to what she had had in her mind when she began speaking, that rose to her lips now mockingly.

She would not come out with it; she stopped resolutely, and turned it off, saying,

'Only women are too foolish.'

But the satisfied smile on Alec's lips, as he rose from the table and lounged off to smoke in the greenhouse, showed what *he* thought.

Elise looked pensive; for an instant only. The contingency that had visited her imagination was not amusing, and she shook it off.

'Bah, what is there to fear? Cressida is not a miss in her teens fresh from school, nor even the sort of girl to be fascinated by Alec. Trust her to see through him; and what a lathe-and-plaster man it is. Still the girl has a good deal of the madcap in her, and it would be most undesirable to have it called out. On the whole, it's a very good thing that she *is* engaged.'

There is one among the burdens of life which most people feel to be heavy and a check to action, and some decline to bear in consequence, but which Elise would always take up cheerfully, nor find out its weight—responsibil-

ity. It amused her of all things to busy herself in other people's matters, and she was interested in watching the success of her experiments, as it were, from a socially scientific point of view; but the good or evil thus brought about by her influence to the people themselves were points about which she was not given to rejoicing or distressing herself.

The last twenty-four hours had for Cressida been marked by one or two incidents which, however trivial, had shaken her confidence in herself, and led her to reviewing her position more seriously than usual.

She had embarked with her eyes open, but had miscalculated her provision. She had taken, for better or worse, a certain resolution that, though with no deep root in her feelings, was to regulate her behaviour. She had had no idea how difficult this would be.

But so far from repenting that resolution, which would have been weak, she was bent upon arranging everything to tally with it.

So she began to map out and circumscribe her life, inner and outer, and to determine exactly what she would and what she would not be. Her engagement was a crisis that ought to reform and remodel everything in her. So people who would revolutionise a country in a turn of the hand think they can alter a living organism as they might alter a costume.

How did she and he stand then, face to face with each other? Norbert did not ask her to idolise him as he idolised her. But he wanted her affection—he had it, out of doubt; he wanted her regard, he had that; and he wanted her loyal faith, for ever.

He *should* have it, she swore.

She was going to keep all her

frivolous tastes in check; she would not look at Mr. Marriott's diamonds, nor spend over much time and thought upon her *trousseau*. She would study, read German and political economy with Fan, and keep aloof as much as possible for a time from general society, where the longing, springing from the power, to shine and minister to her vanity might prove too strong and run away with her.

She took to dressing perfectly plainly, like a nun, confining her ingenuity to collars and cuffs; she went much to church, read regularly with Fan, and avoided Elise de Saumarez, whose company she foresaw might be fatal to this newly-fledged character she was attempting. Only once had she been to Monks' Orchard to call formally on her friend, and happened not to find her. And her friend, for some cause or other, had not pressed her with invitations.

But at times the girl grew restless, and in the main she was profoundly dissatisfied. Was there not something hollow and unreal in all this saintship? The idea of hypocrisy revolted her more than all. Yet this world-renunciation on her part was but a spurious coquetry, this simplicity as artificial in its way as anything she had ever done.

The best company in such moods was Fan, whose natural, strong, healthy, ardent interest in general subjects Cressida admired; it rarely failed to call up her own. For she had the germs of it in her, and in rapid grasp and comprehension of any new study or idea was far ahead of her young friend. If only she could have been as free from the intrusive element of self! If once she could have sunk the preoccupying, distorting, enthralling personality of Cressida Landon!

'Fan,' she said to her quite suddenly one morning over their German, 'do you think you could ever *hate* me—hate me outright, you know?'

Their studies were conducted for the most part out of doors. Their present and favourite retreat was under a tall spreading ash-tree behind the church, a spot screened by the building from observation from the road, and where for years Cressida had been in the habit of coming to watch the sunset on fine evenings, often with Fan for her companion, but oftener with Norbert in his holidays. The low wall where they sat commanded a superb view of an undulating sea of cornfields and green meadow-land stretching away to the distant horizon. Cressida could not always keep her eyes and her attention fixed on whatever they happened to be reading, and she would now and then perplex her fellow-student by questions seemingly *apropos* of nothing at all, like the present.

'Never!' replied Fan promptly.

'Not if I were to do something wild, odious — something that made me hate myself?'

'No, not then.'

'But why, Fan? Surely what's odious in one person must be so in another.'

'Not quite so odious. At least I might not taste it, perhaps, amongst so much that I liked.'

Cressida sighed.

'Only think, Fan, what it would be supposing the strongest bent in you be one that can lead to nothing but evil.'

Cressida had but a vague idea of what she meant, Fan a vaguer, as she replied quaintly,

'Well, even then, supposing one knew it, and there were twenty other forces pulling one in good directions, one ought to be safe.'

Cressida mused. It might be so.

But she knew what it was to feel all this goodness slipping away from her, and thought she had deserved some credit these last weeks for her exemplary behaviour in general, and her avoidance of Monks' Orchard in particular.

Late one afternoon Elise came bearing down upon the parsonage quite suddenly. She had noticed that Cressida was inclined to fight shy of her, and Elise would be the last person to persist in bestowing her society where it was not welcomed; but her visit to-day was for a purpose. She found the girl in one of her hours of depression; and though Cressida tried to force gaiety into her expression and manner, the effort was palpable to Mrs. de Saumarez, who, however, made no remark, reflecting, 'Ah, the natural reaction after the bubble of excitement. Poor thing!'

'I warn you,' she said, as she seated herself on the sofa, 'that I've come to beg. But before I do my errand, tell me how you are, child?'

'O, perfectly well,' she replied, smiling mechanically.

'I daresay,' returned Elise; 'only that was not what I meant. I'm not your medical man. I want to know how you are getting on. You must find this world very weary, "asleep or dead," with young Alleyne away,' she added semi-maliciously.

'I find it is far worse even than I expected,' Cressida exclaimed, with a double meaning Elise could not entirely catch.

'But is it really of any use to shut yourself up, as I hear you have been doing lately?' she suggested.

'I'm very much afraid it is not,' returned Cressida, laughing constrainedly.

Double entendre, again. 'You are not happy,' said Elise, surveying her with an exploring eye.

'O, not in the least,' Cressida acknowledged.

'Did you think you would be?' asked the older lady, an ironical smile playing round the corners of her mouth.

'When then,' said the girl, 'if not now?'

'Cressida, that is a sentimental speech that sounds oddly on your lips. The truth is, you want a good lecture.'

Cressida shut her eyes and smiled wilfully.

'Yes, I know; on the folly, first of having romantic hallucinations, and then of insisting on verifying them in real life;—on the fact that love and marriage have been glorified into a pseudo-importance for the special benefit of poets and novel-writers; but that we live in a positive age, and so on.'

'But instead of delivering it,' resumed Elise unheedingly, 'I am going to carry you home with me to dine; that is, if you'll have so much mercy on me.'

'To dine?'

'Yes; I want a lady. Mrs. Alleyne has failed; but the others are coming—the Colonel and a daughter. I asked the family, who have been very civil to me, and I wanted somebody to meet Joe Kennedy, who is down with us for a few days. By the way, I like that man; he is so cheerful. I think all cheerful people deserve to be decorated. You will come. What in the world can I find to say to a Miss Alleyne? You mustn't say no. I've seen next to nothing of you since I came,' she observed, in mild reproach.

Cressida had a faint wish to go, and felt, moreover, too indolent to refuse.

'Will you go and dress, then?' said Mrs. de Saumarez, taking up a book; 'and I shall wait and take you back with me in the carriage.'

Cressida went. In strict accordance with her newly-formed principles, she discarded all her evening toilettes of many colours, and presently reappeared dressed entirely in black. Elise surveyed her critically, but nodded approval.

'It is curious,' she said, 'how much better that colour becomes you than any other. But a touch of life we must have.'

There was a glass tray on the table filled with wild apple-blossom. Elise picked out the choicest sprigs of delicate pink-and-white flowers, which she proceeded to arrange effectively about the girl's hair and dress, Cressida remonstrating faintly.

'Come, my dear,' said Elise, in amazement; 'you talk as if, instead of going to be married, you were going to take the veil.'

'I feel as if I were,' said Cressida frankly.

But the slight change of scene had its favourable effect upon her. During the drive Elise soothingly turned the conversation on to other things. That evening Cressida felt more herself than she had done for days. The little dinner-party was pleasant. The Tsar appeared, accompanied by Fan; her elders being all disabled by influenza, she had to submit to put herself into evening dress and be taken out by her father, feeling, she remarked privately, like a monkey with its master going to a show. Elise was an admirable hostess; Joe, genial all round, as usual. Alec talked little, contenting himself chiefly with looking uncommonly well at the head of the table. There was a general exhilaration at work that told increasingly upon Cressida. She felt satisfied with herself, delighted to find how brilliant she still could be.

'I used to think that places,

like people, had a native individuality; that once a dull house meant always a dull house, and that there was a kind of dreariness that stuck fast. I've changed my mind to-night.'

Dinner was over, and the ladies were together in the drawing-room. There was ample cause for Cressida's change of mind. Monks' Orchard had been startled into a new sort of life, of which the leading idea was, amusement at any price. An indescribable atmosphere of ease and pleasantness pervaded the rooms. Luxury was everywhere and without display; how different from the ill-digested grandeur of the Marriotts' 'residence'!—home was a wrong word for a medium where the inmates looked as curiously out of place as flies in amber. Mrs. de Saumarez might have lived all her life instead of six weeks at Monks' Orchard, so thoroughly comfortable did she make herself and her friends under that roof. Sans Souci should have been the name written over the gates; *Laissez faire, laissez aller*, the motto inscribed on each door as a cue to the guests. A pleasing sense of expansion spread over everybody; even Fan, though she looked askance at Elise, whom she instinctively distrusted, noting reprovingly the preponderance of the ornamental over the useful in her surroundings, especially the stepson, who, so far as Fan's observation went, did nothing but twirl his moustache.

Elise laughed. 'It seems the Kennedys make themselves scarce; and an uninhabited house is always dreary.'

'Not so dreary as an inhabited, sometimes,' said Fan definitively.

'Well, I desire nothing better than to exorcise blue devils in general, and to "lay" the very shadows of dull men and women

that may haunt the place whilst I am here,' said Mrs. de Saumarez; 'but you young people must aid and abet me. The neighbourhood has been extremely kind in lavishing invitations upon us, and no one can complain of my not accepting their civilities if I return them properly. What sort of entertainment would be most acceptable, I wonder?'

'Something that would bring together the greatest number of the young men and young ladies, and with as few chaperons as possible,' retorted Fan promptly, but in a tone of inimitable scorn.

Elise looked at her curiously; examining her, thought Fan, just as if she were a youthful gorilla, or some other newly-invented animal.

'Why?' she asked mildly.

'Because Lullington is still in the superstitious stage; believing in the three-volume-novel philosophy that teaches that the aim of life is to fall in love in the first place, and that everything ought only to be looked at and cared for, so far as it may somehow have something to do with that and matrimony.'

'You don't think so, then?' asked Elise, amused.

'Do you?' said Fan, thinking it superfluous to answer for herself.

Elise laughed and shrugged her shoulders. 'Not precisely,' she replied moderately. But the aim of life in her private philosophy was to amuse oneself, and she had strong doubts, founded on experience, as to the unmixed tendencies of marriage towards promoting that end.

'Indeed,' objected Cressida, 'I think Lullington is not so far wrong in its own case, at least as regards the women. Look at the six Miss Churchwards; is it likely that they will do anything in their six lives more important to themselves and mankind at

large than marry? Did their mother ever do anything more important than marry—their father?

'Ah,' said Elise smoothly, 'of course it is to be expected that just now *you* should look to it as all in all.'

She spoke playfully; but, cat-like, had scratched in her sport. Cressida winced a little under a taunting inner reminder that she had often looked on to a foreign tour, an interesting visit, nay, even a fancy ball, with a great deal more active interest than for the life of her she could now think of her approaching marriage.

'And quite right too,' concluded Elise approvingly. 'So Miss Alleyne is strong-minded and stands up for single blessedness; Cressida for wedded life, as becomes her; and I, having reached the quiet vantage-ground of widowhood, look down philosophically on you both.'

'I hate this woman,' said Fan to herself; 'she's sly. Pretends to be serious, to draw us out, and then makes game of our earnest. Brute, I shall hold my tongue!' and she relapsed into silence accordingly.

When the gentlemen joined them presently, the Tsar took the seat by Elise. She could be most things to most men, and made him a particularly apt companion. It was impossible to quarrel with her—unless she wished it—on any subject under heaven. She would let her cavalier be as dictatorial as he chose; he would never hurt her feelings, or shock her principles, or even discover what they were. What burning subjects can exist for those who regard life as a farce! Politics interested her—like clever tricks with cards. Poetry, to her, was the raving in time and in tune of happy lunatics. She read

every book that came in her way, impartially, with previous intent to make fun of it, and preferred silly publications and weak novels, as affording more food for ridicule. Her ideal of life would be to turn it into a series of amusing anecdotes. She had an inkling of the Greywell potentate's irascibility, and knew how, like Scheherazade, to avert all that was unpleasant or hazardous from his mind by a string of trivial, entertaining table-talk.

Alec, to Fan's annoyance, came up to her and spent some time in teasing her. It amused him to try and make her say rude things, and in the experiment he succeeded beyond his expectations. Fan was longing for him to go away. The photograph book would be better company than this Ineffable, with a face like one of the better-looking Roman emperors, who talked nonsense, and treated her, besides, as if she was a little girl.

He considered her as such, though a very singular specimen, and continued his *persiflage* in spite of rebuffs. At last, she simply got up and marched off into a glass verandah, which opened out of the smaller of the two divisions of which the room consisted, thinking he *must* take the hint.

Cressida had just strayed in there to look round at the flowers, which were superb. Joe was with her. Presently Fan, to her dismay, perceived that her tormenter was following her to where she had taken refuge. Bent on escaping him somehow, she suddenly pounced upon Kennedy, begging him to come and show and explain to her a set of American views he had brought down, and which she had caught sight of in the next room. Joe good-humouredly suffered himself to be carried off, and Fan saw Alec

laughing at her under his moustache.

Meanwhile, Cressida, unconscious of these innocent manoeuvres, was flitting along the verandah. She had a kind of affinity with exotic flowers, a fondness for them, and lingered among the brilliant azaleas, spreading ferns, and orchids with which the place was crammed.

Alec, standing at the opposite end, was looking down at her across a foreground that was a blaze of pink in flower. She became conscious of it quickly; his manner of looking disconcerted her more than a hard downright stare would have done. His light glance had something pointed in it, and fell like a volley of invisible shafts, striking home, and with a certain significance, where he chose.

Cressida instinctively turned her head away, and bent down to examine a magnificent purple-and-white lily, whose fragrance, almost too strong in its sweetness, scented the whole air around.

Alec made his way carelessly along the greenhouse towards her.

'I wish I could tell,' he began, when he was close beside her, 'where I had seen your face before.'

'What!' said Cressida, smiling, but without looking up; 'have you forgotten our encounter in the woods?'

'Is it likely now?' said Alec, with emphasis.

'Then I suppose I am to understand that you took me for an old acquaintance that first morning, already?'

'Your face, certainly, did not seem strange to me, even then.'

Cressida shook her head disapprovingly, and replied, keeping her face averted,

'That is very dreadful to hear. It makes me feel that there are a good many me's abroad in the

world—different editions of myself, and better ones, perhaps: who knows? I'm only a type then, and I hate that.' Suddenly raising her face to his, she added, 'I should like to be unique.'

'I should say that you are,' returned Alec quietly; 'and that must account for my impression, I suppose.'

'How puzzling you are!' laughed Cressida. 'There's only one alternative left: you and I must have met in some previous life—in the world of spirits.'

'World of spirits—what's that?' said Alec vaguely, tampering with the leaves of a maiden-hair fern that grew next to the lily. 'Do you believe in ghosts and spirits, and those things? Of course you do. All ladies are superstitious.'

'Are they?'

'All young ladies. They may say what they like, there isn't one but she believes that nonsense in her heart.'

'I should like to prove you wrong,' said Cressida archly; but wondering aside to herself why she was prolonging this slightly silly-sounding duologue.

'You couldn't,' said Alec confidently. 'Any fair test that was proposed, you'd refuse.'

'Not I.'

'Or you'd accept it, and your courage would fail when it was put to the proof.'

'Not mine,' wilfully.

'Well, for instance, you know, of course, that the park here is haunted; that a Mrs. Kennedy's ghost "walks" by the Obelisk every night.'

'I believe I've heard some nursery stories to that effect.'

'Very good; but for all that I'll engage that not you, nor any young lady I know, would dare to cross the park alone after dark, and pass the Obelisk, through all those black firs, where the owls

are hooting and the bats and death's-head moths flying about.'

Cressida hesitated and laughed.

'There; I told you that you'd refuse any ordeal that was proposed,' said Alec. 'Next time you'll believe me.'

'Come,' said Cressida carelessly, 'you don't mean to say that you think I should be *afraid*?'

'Upon my honour, I know you would.'

'Then you must think you know me better than I know myself.'

'It would be rude for me to say that. But I'll wager anything you like—I'll wager that lily, to which you seem to have taken a fancy—it's mine; I brought the root from India—that you never walk to the Obelisk and back, after dark, and alone.'

'And if ever I did,' said Cressida jestingly, 'would you believe me when I told you the next day, and grant that your wager was lost?'

Pause. Then Alec replied in the same tone,

'O, you might leave your card there. I shall look carefully every morning; when I find it, I shall know who has been.'

'And then?'

'Then you will have won, and I shall have to confess that I did not know you before,' he said deliberately. 'What, are you going now?' for she was moving away.

'Yes, the scent of your Indian lily is very sweet, but rather overpowering,' said Cressida; 'it makes me quite giddy,' and she glided off to join Fan and Joe Kennedy, and look over the photographs with them. Alec did not follow her, but sauntered into the next room to make a third with Elise and the Tsar. As Cressida automatically took one after another of the photographs into her hand, her mind was as far off as the countries themselves.

'Well,' said Alec to his step-mother, when their guests were gone, and before he went to join Joe, who was smoking in the garden, 'have I been on my good behaviour, or not? Have I done my duty as a host should? Have I flirted with Miss Landon?'

'You've behaved very well indeed,' said Elise complacently; 'alarmingly well, I may say. After such an exemplary beginning, Alec, I feel as if a falling off must come; so pray be doubly on your guard.'

It was il Penseroso that Elise had carried off with her to Monks' Orchard. It was l'Allegro who, on returning to the parsonage, put a laughing head into Mr. Landon's study and wished him good-night. He asked anxiously if she had enjoyed her evening. Cressida said 'Yes,' ambiguously, as you say 'Yes' when you have enjoyed yourself immoderately, and can give no good reason why.

CHAPTER IX.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE.

'PRAY what manner of man is this young De Saumarez?' asked Mr. Landon mildly of Cressida, as they sat at breakfast, and she was reporting the party in detail to her father with her usual light and amusing touches. 'I don't hear very favourable rumours of him and his antecedents. But Lullington is a wasp's nest; the fountain-head of all that is most ill-natured in the way of gossip.'

'O, I daresay he deserves all that people can find to say about him,' said Cressida, pulling her roll to pieces viciously, and addressing herself to slaughter Alec without remorse. 'To begin with, he is rather nice-looking, and that has spoiled him. Papa, do you think there ever was a man who could be good-looking in the first place,

and *not* good for nothing in the second?

'Well, my dear, there's Joe Kennedy, a fine young fellow enough, yet hard-working too. Not even you could call him a useless member of society.'

'No, no, papa, you won't understand,' said Cressida despairingly. 'Mr. de Saumarez is not worth Joe's little finger. Nobody could call him fine-looking either; but he is pretty. And men like Joe never are vain, but this sort always.'

'Ah, he's a conceited fellow then, besides?'

'Worse than that,' said Cressida, who felt as if she owed Norbert a peace-offering, and was somehow making it by her persistent disparagement of Alec, which was spoken in perfect sincerity, and gratified her moreover as an innocent revenge for the undercurrent of flirtation into which he had been pleased to draw her. 'He is empty-headed, and gives himself airs, I fancy.'

'No acquisition to the place, evidently,' quoth the parson regretfully. 'I had hoped you might have had some pleasant society there during the spring.'

'O, I hope that still,' replied Cressida. 'We aren't accustomed to look for anything very good to come out of Monks' Orchard. I, for one, shall be thankful for the smallest mercies in the way of amusements; and whatever these people do will at least not be tame or commonplace. They will have sets of friends down from London to stay, and give dances and picnics, and so on—enough just to keep us alive—till the summer;' and she sighed involuntarily, with a glance at Norbert's letter, which lay by her plate unopened.

Mr. Landon smiled complacently.

'Too precious, too sacred to be discussed in the presence of an eye-witness,' he thought; and when, breakfast over, he went forth to his parish work, he smiled again as he saw his daughter walk out into the garden with her letter in her hand, taking it to read among the flowers.

It was a fresh April morning, woods and meads bright with the inimitable green of fresh-born foliage, the birds singing with a kind of fury, the air full of the intoxicating quintessence of spring. It worked upon Cressida as she sauntered along, quickening, as it were, the sense of life, and making her feel everything doubly. Forgetting her letter, which she still held absently in her hand, she let her thoughts go free, and walked on, like a *somnambule*, stooping now and then to smell or pluck a flower in an aimless, absent way.

The forget-me-nots here were scentless, unlike the Alpine ones, but the perfume of a plant of wild thyme, with a sharp swift association, sent her thoughts shooting off to Switzerland.

'Soon it will be spring on the Weissberg.'

The impression, vivid as though the scene were before her, came back on her of a certain sunrise, and Stephen Halliday, and his botany lecture that ran so wild. In her preoccupation she let fall her letter from her hand.

This roused her. 'I do believe I'm growing sentimental,' she said, trying to laugh; and seating herself with an air of resolution on a bench that encircled the stem of a hawthorn-tree, she began to read. There was a slight, painful contraction on her brow, which deepened and deepened.

Presently, with a heavy sigh, she let her fingers close over the paper, and sat thinking, or rather

listening, to herself; for Cressida, with all her contradictions, had a kind of outside judgment that was always the same, a demon that came to commune with her, and was apt to speak the truth.

Norbert's letter was not a love-letter, as the word goes. But Cressida knew him well enough to read between the lines. The astonishingly high spirits, the humour, the elasticity, the expansion that broke through; she could not shut her eyes to the surprising change, nor to where the cause of it lay. At the end there was a jesting, half-mischievous message from Lefroy.

Cressida passed a bad half-hour with her demon, who would gloss over nothing, but insisted on laying bare her relations to her affianced lover, without sparing her feelings in the smallest degree.

'When you said, "My lot is yours," you knew how it would be, knew what it meant to him. And now when it has come to pass, and you see it, and how a fresh life has begun for him, you pretend to yourself to be taken by surprise.'

How miserably his feeling, in its singleness and generosity, seemed to dwarf her own sentiment towards him, by contrast! It showed up her own poor motives in a more unflattering light than had been thrown on them yet.

'You consented, because you were impatient to be launched in a brilliant sphere, and the opportunity was tempting. Half your nature—not the best half—is unknown to him. Why, if he could see into it, he would hate you, hate you!'

'Yes' had been easily spoken; and at first, and so long as the whole matter could be treated theoretically, she could still persist in beholding there a wise,

and a fair, agreement. But lately everything that made the coming event more and more of a reality to her seemed to estrange her more and more from it and from him, till she was getting to regard the future with a feeling simply of dread. By what fatal misreckoning on her part had it come about? She, Cressida, the most clinging of mortals, had, in an evil hour, given her hand to a man who never had had, and never would have, the faintest hold over her inclinations.

She saw herself worse than she was. For in that evil hour she had not gone so far as to recognise the fact that she meant to marry him, and let her heart have its serious passions apart. It now seemed to her as though she must have said this to herself in so many words. Keenly alive to the nature and extent of Norbert's love, she felt too late she owed it respect and something more. Though perhaps incapable of such self-absorbing ideal devotion herself, it seemed to her like sacrilege to have accepted it on the terms she would have to give; and here she must go on deceiving, or disappointing by undeceiving him—shameful alternatives, both.

What then? Break it off. For the first time she looked at the idea, but only to start away from it. It would be such an awful confession of weakness; the main step was more formidable than any she had ever yet had to face; and then the details, so odious, so mortifying. And there was a kind of tenderness, too, for this lad, who had revolutionised his life for her, and whom she had allowed, led on, so to do.

One thing was certain—that meditations like these confused and half-maddened her. Perhaps all this was but a wild passing

mood. She had engaged herself calmly and advisedly; a few months hence it would be irrevocable. In the mean time it might be better to avoid thought, shut her eyes, and drown regret, presentiment, and above all reminiscence.

The sight of a manly figure coming along the walk in her direction gave her a nervous thrill. It was an unutterable relief to see it was Joe, only Joe, dear old fellow!

'The servant said you were out here,' he began apologetically, 'and so I, very unceremoniously—'

'O, that was right,' said Cressida. 'I am so glad to see you.'

'Why?' he asked naively.

'O, because we got no talk last night,' she replied.

'I called,' he said, 'to wish you good-bye. I had to come early, for I've just got a letter that obliges me to leave Monks' Orchard at once.'

'Going!' she said, surprised, and in a tone of disappointment.

'Tom is down with typhoid fever. His wife sends me word that he is worse, and as usual they are at sixes and sevens. I'm going to see if I can straighten things for them a bit.'

'How provoking!' sighed Cressida. Really it seemed as if Tom's fever had come on purpose to vex her. Tom had been sent into the world to vex people. As to his illness, it was probably a false alarm, so far as danger was concerned. He was not going to die. Good-for-nothing people are never in a hurry to leave the world to make room for their betters. Tom Kennedy would be sure to pull through anything. It would be Joe who would have the fever and die.

'Only don't catch it yourself,' she said, with a forced smile.

He smiled back, saying coolly,

'O, I've got fewer to miss me, than he;' for Joe was pretty well hardened to possibilities. Besides, he regarded his life as a loan, the interest on which duty, when it called, would always find him ready to put at the disposal of other people; and as to the principal, that might any day be reclaimed.

There was a little natural bitterness in his tone, but none in the frank, patient look that met her.

'I wish I were as good as you,' she exclaimed vehemently.

He laughed. 'What on earth are you talking about? Why, it is we men who have to look up to you women for notions of goodness.'

'Some men to some women perhaps; but take ourselves for instance. How valuable you are in the world, and I, what a useless person!'

'You women never know,' said he, 'how and when your influence tells on us.' He wanted to explain to her how his mere acquaintance with her had done him good, as it had, in many softening and refining ways, but he could not find the right words. 'Do you suppose,' he asked presently, 'that a fellow like me can know you and not be the better man for it?'

'Then you don't think me an utterly worthless and contemptible creature?' she said wistfully.

His look answered her. It was grave and sad. For his mind misgave him that her engagement was not leading her on in that path of roses which outsiders took for granted. Had he not known as much from the first? But neither advice nor open sympathy could Joe Kennedy offer Cressida Landon in this emergency. Yet his mere silent presence calmed her a little. It was always so.

There was an out-going strength and steadiness that seemed to emanate from his straightforward character and buoyed up the weak and irresolute; in their intercourse with him they were not so utterly unregenerate.

After a pause he began bluntly, 'When I may see you again I don't know now, this business may tie me down for another month, and my leave's up in August; but—'

Cressida cut him short, exclaiming,

'Promise me that whatever you hear of me you won't despise me utterly, that you won't think very badly of me until, at least, you know from me how far I'm to blame for anything that may happen.'

'I promise,' he said, rather taken aback by the appeal, though it merely confirmed his previous apprehensions, and he thought he understood perfectly what it meant. It was more than Cressida herself did. She had spoken on a wild unaccountable impulse of the moment.

It was a singular parting. No good-bye was spoken. They shook hands, as allies might after making their covenant; then Joe walked away, thinking gloomily,

'Poor, poor girl! Is she actually beginning to feel that she has made an utter mistake?' To say to himself that it *was* a mistake was one thing; to find her realising it vividly was another. He pitied her profoundly, and did not blame her at all. She had been 'led into it,' he supposed. There was nothing he could do.

Well, he would not think about it more than he could help. It was Joe's habit and nature to go ahead, and not perplex his brain with what was beside his path. At present his business in hand was to mitigate his wretched

cousin's plight, as pitiable in its way as Cressida's, and more pressing.

Everything and everybody seemed to Cressida to have conspired against her that day to drive her frantic. The afternoon was chiefly spent in receiving visitors, Lullington acquaintances, of which there came a string with intent to congratulate: friends anxious to know if the day was fixed, girls inquisitive about the trousseau, all commiserating her exceedingly upon the enforced absence of Mr. Alleyne, to which sad deprivation they laid the dispiritedness which appeared beneath her strenuous attempts at gaiety. The exertion was as severe as that of an actress throughout a heavy protracted play, and left her with all her nerves vibrating, her frame at once over-tired and strung up to unnatural perturbation. Everything jarred upon her: the servants coming for orders, the village people calling at the house for this and for that; and finally she had to listen to a mild but long rigmarole of rebuke from her father for having forgotten to send or take down a basket of wine and jellies which had been ordered for the sick woman at the Monks' Orchard lodge. It was late now, and the servants were busy, and the invalid would be disappointed, have to wait, and so forth.

It was partly with the desire of escaping from the scene of these worries that Cressida after dinner offered to take down the basket to the lodge herself. Mr. Landon looked surprised at her volunteering, but thought it so good of her that he did not like to discourage such a sign of grace. He merely asked if it was not rather late. O no, said Cressida, it was light still; she would be back in half an hour. He thanked her for the offer as for a favour, and Cressida

started off leisurely across the meadows in the spring twilight, soon reaching the lodge.

She was always gentle and sympathetic in the sick-room, and her visits were apt to be valued above those of more regularly benevolent and useful people. Feeling herself welcome she stayed some while, thinking that really with all her faults she made a very good nurse or ministering angel when required.

It was true. Her mother during her last illness could not bear to have any one but Cressida near her. As for the rheumatic old dame with only a small child to keep her company, this treasure of a visitor came as a godsend; she was only too thankful to detain her, and it was dark and approaching nine o'clock when Cressida left the lodge.

Again she lingered outside at the gate, close by the entrance to the Monks' Orchard woods. How black they looked to-night, how ghostly! Ha, now would be the very time to go and win her mock wager, to cross the wood and leave her card on the Obelisk fearlessly; and Alec coming to-morrow would be confounded quite.

It struck her as rather a tempting freak. Unconsciously she was longing, seeking, after the fret and uneasiness of the day, for some distraction. It was wonderfully easy, almost refreshing, to throw herself into a little folly of this kind, the more *bizarre* the better.

The moment was a capital one. She was constitutionally timid; but nervousness seemed to have taken leave of her to-night, expelled in fact by the restless activity of a slightly overstrained system. She went on a step or two, then hesitated. Supposing she were to be met or seen tramping alone through the woods after

dark. It would have something beyond an odd appearance. But whom should she meet! It was too late for any one but a poacher, and she said to herself that to her certain knowledge Alec took care to keep such at a safe distance from his boundaries. Besides, it was not really so very late—nine o'clock. A quarter of an hour's walk would bring her to the Obelisk.

Something irresistible seemed to push her on; her wayward reluctance to go back to her wedding-presents and bridal cogitations at the parsonage was quite enough, if it was not all.

She started off heedlessly along the narrow, mossy woodland path, for the first few moments enjoying the dusky walk and the adventurous feeling prodigiously. The sky was slightly overcast, but the moon must have been out behind, for there was light enough, except in the thickest parts of the wood. She knew the ways and byways of the park by heart, having so often explored them with Norbert and Fan that she could have got along blindfold. Her light foot-tread and the *frou-frou* of her sweeping gown hardly scared the night-roamers, such as they were. Rabbits started now and then in the fern; a bird, crouched in its nest among the blue wild hyacinths, fluttered off at her approach, and the rustle made her shrink; but all her starts and tremors were, she decided, purely material, and might be reduced to a not unreasonable dread of a strange dog, or a robber, or, what would be far worse, a keeper. It would be horrid to be seen, she felt; and this fear presently became tremendous, though not before she had got on too far to retreat with dignity. Then the whole expedition began to strike her as rather childish; but underneath there was still that obstin-

ate, desperate quest of amusement impelling her on. Besides, the Obelisk was nearly in sight. Only two minutes more and she has won.

She hurried on to get it over. The tall spruce-firs and larches bordering the path here cast grim and ominous shadows. Then came the break in the woods, the spreading cedar,—and the gleaming monolith was there before her. A real, nervous agitation began to gain on her now, but it would have been ridiculous to waver when within reach of the goal. She recovered herself with an effort, walked deliberately up the bank to the Obelisk, and taking a card from her purse, inserted it deftly between the joints of the marble at the basement. It would never be noticed, such a mere scrap of paper, except by an eye on the look out for it.

Then she paused, went a step or two backwards, laughing to herself at the freak, and stood still for a moment triumphantly, as if to dare the ghost of the defunct Mrs. Kennedy to stand forth.

The next instant she barely repressed a shriek. A tall dark figure was emerging from a group of trees opposite—a man: she was seen—discovered. In her panic she could have turned and flown headlong, but that impulse she resisted. Almost simultaneously she had recognised him—Alec, lifting his cap to her as he approached. There was a look of triumph on *his* face too. It gave Cressida a momentary chill, but she stood her ground with seeming composure, and met his glance victoriously.

‘Confess yourself mistaken for once,’ she said.

‘I’ve lost, no doubt of it,’ he returned. ‘For once I would rather not have won. But I hardly dared hope you would prove me wrong, you know.’

Whilst they were speaking, Cressida’s mind went through a whole train of rapid reflections. Alec then had come hoping, if not expecting, to meet her there; and something in his face convinced her of *his* impression that she also had come as to a rendezvous.

Worse. Had not there been the ghost of an idea of the sort underneath?

Be that as it may, the thing is done; she must not make matters worse by seeming confused now; she must take it naturally, make a stand, laugh it all off as a joke. It should have been easy. But there seemed a kind of cold spell upon her. She had felt the same, she remembered, last night when they were talking in the verandah.

‘Now you have come,’ said he, ‘I shall at least have the pleasure of escorting you home.’

‘O, no,’ said Cressida; ‘indeed that is not necessary. I assure you I am not afraid. I would rather go alone, and give you the crowning proof of my courage.’

She felt the tone of her remonstrance rather faint. Alec did not dream of regarding it, knowing himself very well to be master of the situation. He merely smiled and persisted, and she said to herself it was no use declining. Light expostulation and serious entreaty would be equally wasted on this Harry Madcap. If she hung back and objected, it would merely prolong their interview; whenever she went, he would go too. It was only natural that, thinking what he thought, he should doubt the sincerity of her reluctance; she certainly did not see her way to convincing him at present; so, without saying more, she began to retrace her steps, submitting to his companionship and protection. It was an adventure, an eccentric one, yet not wholly uncongenial

after the terrible tedium and discords of that afternoon. But she feared Alec would attribute the incident simply and solely to his superior powers of fascination. No doubt they had had their hand in it.

The walk seemed much longer this time. After the first few minutes Cressida's slight flurry abated. Alec's manner was serenity itself, and helped to tranquillise her and put her at ease.

Only he would keep stopping her every now and then. This time it was to point out to her the glowworms in the grass; this time to look at a fairy ring of fungi, or a large moth clinging to the stem of a tree.

'So you really were not frightened as you came all along these dark byways by yourself?' said he, as they brushed through the coppice by the narrow thread of path that just permitted of their keeping side by side.

'No,' said Cressida; 'except that I feared I might be taken again for a poacher, and shot this time in downright earnest. But as for those ghostly terrors you declare all ladies are subject to, they were far from me.'

'Yet you were as white as a sheet when I came out and met you.'

'You frightened me,' said Cressida. 'But you are not a ghost exactly.'

He laughed. 'Not exactly. Hark! stop a moment. Did you hear that? Wasn't it a what do you call it—nightingale?'

And they stood still, listening in silence, Cressida quite forgetting that it was too early in the year for a 'what do you call it—nightingale?'

At this rate they did not get over the ground very quickly.

'Do let us make haste,' she urged presently, in earnest.

'What a tremendous hurry you

are in!' said Alec. 'Well, what do you say to our turning off and trying this path? It looks like a short cut.'

'Thanks,' said Cressida; 'but let me tell you it leads back into the woods again; so don't judge by appearances.'

'Are you bent on getting rid of me as soon as you possibly can?' was his next question.

'Bent upon it,' said Cressida, smiling.

She spoke thoughtlessly, but the coquetting accent was not a little maddening to Alec, who was much more powerfully taken by the subtle charm of her look and manner than either of them realised. A shade more *abandon* on her part, a shade less discrimination on his, and he would have probably said or done something that would have made Cressida hate him. Fortunately, or unfortunately, he silenced himself.

'You ought to remember,' he said, half bantering, 'that this walk with you may be all I shall have to look back upon perhaps—in a few months, when you are married.'

'When I am married!' repeated Cressida mechanically, her heart beginning to beat oddly. The words sounded in her ears like unreal mockery.

'Yes,' said Alec, with a perfect semblance of innocence, and looking up inquiringly. 'Is it a secret? Ought I not to mention it?'

Cressida laughed ironically.

'O, anything but a secret.'

'A sacred subject, then,' he said, with mock solemnity, 'that oughtn't to pass profane lips like mine.'

'Well,' said Cressida, with the bitter flippancy of a sadness which finds no other vent, 'don't you think matrimony, like death to the Greeks and Romans, is a subject too dreadful and dismal to be

alluded to in a direct fashion, or in general conversation?

Alec laughed immoderately. 'Is that what you think? Of course I see that the subject of your marriage might easily be a very dismal one for some people. But to you,' insinuatingly, 'do you mean to say—'

'O, I mean,' interrupted Cressida, 'that as death kills our outward selves, so marriage may kill our souls.'

'You are getting too deep for me,' said Alec; and Cressida would herself have been puzzled to account for her last speech, or the feeling that prompted it. 'Now my stepmother is always bothering me to marry. It would be the saving of me, she says. Why, she began about an heiress this very morning, and even offered to propose for me herself.'

'And didn't you accept?' asked Cressida, roguishness getting the upper hand in her again.

'I really forget at this moment what I did say,' returned Alec thoughtfully. 'Of course it was a strong temptation to hold out. Fancy having all the trouble taken off one's hands, like that!'

'Are you so very much at a loss for words, then?' returned Cressida lightly. 'I should never have guessed it, you know.'

'O, generally speaking, in society and so on, I—I find as much as I care to say. But imagine having to make such a declaration as that in proper form. What on earth should one say? Tell me, now, how ought I to begin?'

'I really have no idea,' said Cressida, involuntarily quickening her pace.

'Stop, stop!' said Alec. 'You are tearing your dress, dragging a long bramble after you. Wait!' As he proceeded very leisurely to disentangle the spray, he resumed, 'Let me see. I might start thus,

with a look, and begin, "Since first I saw your face—"'

'That's a quotation,' interrupted Cressida; 'you ought to be original.'

'O, I must be original, must I? Then I should skip the preliminaries, and begin, "My love,—"'

'No, that would never do,' Cressida objected, laughing and shaking her head; 'you shouldn't begin with that,—the prettiest thing,—because you can never beat it, never get beyond.'

'Couldn't I?' he rejoined, sinking his voice to a whisper, bending down, and speaking close in her ear, with a sudden emphasis that startled her. 'I should say, Cressida—'

She shrank away and tried to look at him indignantly and defiantly, but still checked by a cross-feeling of amusement.

Alec caught himself up, and concluded unabashed, in a cool, half-laughing, half-entreating tone, 'If only that were her name—which I forget.'

Cressida had recovered her self-possession in a second, and returned quite quietly, though in an altered distant voice,

'Ah, I think you could manage it all perfectly well without rehearsal.'

They had just emerged from the woods at about a hundred yards from the lodge. Here she stopped for a moment, look and gesture enjoining Alec not to persist in accompanying her further. Glancing back, when she had reached the gate, she saw he had obeyed, and was standing there among the trees where they had parted, in the same attitude as when she had first caught sight of him under the firs by the Obelisk, and no doubt with the same characteristic smile on his face.

When, ten minutes later, Cressida, breathless, reëntered the par-

sonage, Mr. Landon looked up from his books meekly, and inquired,

'Have you only just returned? It is very late, surely?'

'I stayed longer at the lodge than I meant, and after that did not come in directly,' she answered.

He was too short-sighted to perceive her changing colour. 'There is a telegram for you. Have you seen it?'

It was from Norbert, announcing, she explained, a speedy unexpected visit two days hence.

A pleasant surprise, that quite accounted to her father for her momentary flurry and confusion of mind. She shrank instinctively from his observation though, and went to the window, looking out into the dark vacantly. Quiet came to her by and by, of the desperate sort of a losing gambler who goes on doubling his stake. The luck may change.

CHAPTER X.

STILL WATERS.

OF all bores, the society of your intimate friend in love is surely the most crushing. The attention he vouchsafes to spare you—you, his *alter ego*—by fits and starts, is extremely hazy. His eyes go rambling about as you hold forth to him on subjects of momentous importance to yourself, and that he would have regarded as matters of life and death but the other day, yet nothing could be more ludicrous and feeble than his attempts to simulate interest and listening; whilst broadly expressing by his manner that his thoughts are better employed, and that if his wishes were law, you would be at Jericho.

Such was Lewis Lefroy's philosophy. It struck him therefore

as a rather extraordinary circumstance that he should have found his friend, Norbert Alleyne, these last three months ten times as responsive and companionable as before. But nothing under heaven was allowed to remain a mystery to Lefroy for long, and this particular riddle he solved to his satisfaction by reflecting that young England was growing less and less apt to make itself the plaything of sentiment, and that Norbert was in fact an extreme instance of the positive tendencies of his generation, since so much method had found its way into the madness of even this exclusive passion as to curtail its distracting influence in all the matters of every-day life.

So far beyond the range of Lefroy's lilliputian conceptions was the true action of a king thought overruling all, and for the best. Why, it was the very excess of this single feeling that, by its absolute mastery and spread, had suddenly brought unity and order into Norbert's anarchical life, transforming the face of things, making a crooked world straight, turning stumbling blocks into stepping stones, ignes fatui into safety-lamps for him, with that redeeming power for peace which a mighty force, everywhere preponderant, can exercise. No wonder he became a more lively and inspiring comrade. But of this way of love Lewis Lefroy had no more personal knowledge than of life in the planet Jupiter, and about as much chance of ever obtaining it. It is true he might and did pride himself on an almost feminine susceptibility, but his minute emotions could only do the work of pigmies upon him. His thoughts and affections had all run to breadth without depth, which had enabled him easily to earn a reputation for liberal ideas and universal sympathies. The rapidity

of any new growth in his head and heart was a simple consequence of its light root. Thus he could cut connection with his past, nor bear away a scar or wrinkle in token of too precious or painful bygones, and improvise a future without regrets or fears, or any of those mental struggles and wrenches that leave their mark on a man. Elastic he was as india-rubber; his soul was always seeking further experiences, yet remaining throughout pretty impermeable underneath. Norbert's Horatio, Fan had dubbed him. And so far Lewis Lefroy was indeed a good modern representative of those who can suffer all—hopeless passions, docked ambitions, bereavements, remorse, jealousies,—and yet be 'as one that suffers nothing,' but go through the world enjoying it, *dilettante* fashion; a cautious *régime*, that reduces life's sorrows certainly, but also its joys, to a minimum of intensity. He would have smiled superciliously, however, and thought himself injured or misunderstood had you hinted to him that he was incapable of a master passion. Was he not downright lawless in some of his ideas? He never hesitated to broach the most startling principles or to face the most romantic and perilous situations. He rather liked it. In sooth they were fraught with small danger to him, the minnow! How should he know, except by name, the merciless tenacity of a fixed idea that enters into a man, as has been said, like a screw, to which every year gives another turn, making the rooting up of it—first, a painful, then an excruciating, lastly a fatal, operation.

Such an enormous influence was at present bearing on his young friend's development in a proportionate degree, yet in a perfectly

healthy and natural manner. Norbert's strong and strange individuality—which had hitherto acted simply as a clog, pulling him one way, whilst circumstances were driving him in another—rose now as an active organised force, helping, spurring him on in the course in which he found himself. He was friends with his world now, for everything had threads in it which he could connect with Cressida. Not an incident in his life now but had her stamp upon it. Easy to work well and cheerfully, no matter at what mill, since it is for her sake, and to insure them a home and a future that shall be to her mind. Reading has a new and treble pleasure if he knows the same subjects are occupying her also. When he walks out, his head may revel in schemes for their life together, and devising ways of pleasing her now. Whatever comes to him touches her also. He could even take pleasure in dabbling, in his rare intervals of leisure, with piano- and organ-playing, half resigned to let that gift of his lie buried, and feeling that it is better to serve in love than to reign in music, for that all art is in its essence but the handmaid of love.

But what puzzled Master Lewis most of all was the new face he put on in general society. One evening in particular, Norbert had been dining at Mr. Lefroy senior's house, about a mile from the town, and had distinguished himself signally by his good spirits and flow of conversation. He had played his very best for the delectation of the company, and made himself uncommonly agreeable to everybody. Now 'everybody' included on this occasion not a few of the most charming Axbury girls; and Lewis Lefroy, the young-ladies' man *par excellence*, found himself, to his amazement, with the wind

completely taken out of his sails by Norbert, so marvellously relieved of his shyness as to become the life of the party, and able to show the superior metal of which he was made—a distinction that the Axbury damsels, like all women, were quick enough to appreciate.

It was a fine night, and Lewis Lefroy walked part of the way home with his friend. Leaving the road, they struck across the fields by a quiet 'smoking-path' that wound along by the banks of the Axbury Canal. It was inevitable that Lefroy should indulge in a little gentle 'chaff' on the subject that was occupying his mind in conjunction with his cigarette.

'Do you know I consider you a most unprincipled fellow,' he remarked between the puffs; 'a sad contrast to the model young man we all hoped and expected to see in you. If only she could know of your behaviour to-night, and the dangers to which you've been exposing yourself in such a reckless manner—'

'Terrible, isn't it?' said Norbert, with a faint smile, smoking on contentedly.

'Those girls made a pretty group sitting round you as you played. I was longing to throw off a sketch of you thus as "Apollo and the Muses," and send it to Miss London.'

'Do,' said Norbert good-humouredly, perfectly ready to contemplate for a joke the picture of his volatility, and with the delightful *sang-froid* with which we read of earthquakes, cyclones, and water-spouts at Valparaiso.

'Not that I should be the one to take anybody to task for the sort of thing,' observed Lefroy, anxious to guard against any suspicion of narrowness in his views; 'on the contrary, my theory is

that immutability is, not only impossible, but a mistake.'

'A mistake, eh?' said Norbert, amused. 'How do you make that out? Pray let us hear.'

'I can prove it to you if you like,' said Lefroy, in his cut-and-dried, lawyer-like way. 'Happiness in some shape is a game we are all hunting for. You won't deny that. Or grant so much, at least for the sake of argument.'

'Well.'

'But constancy does us out of far more delight than it can ever procure. Your monomaniac, who won't look at a lily because once in his life he took a fancy to a rose, sacrifices himself, fanatic fashion, to an idea—or would, if such a man ever existed. But men are wiser—women too.'

'What a fellow you are!' said Norbert, laughing. Lefroy's favourite moral fancy trips amused him like ingenious speculation of how to fly; or how to journey to the moon. 'Is it all a humbug, then? Won't you grant poor humanity a single unperjured soul?'

'O, as many as you like, so long as they keep or are kept from the chance of perjuring themselves,' said Lefroy impartially: 'Marianas in moated granges, Pauls and Virginias on desert islands. But I would go no further. I shall always believe, for instance, that if that model representative of female constancy, Barberine, in the play, did come off with flying colours, it was the fault of Rosemberg. You know the story.'

'No.'

'Barberine was the pretty wife of a Hungarian nobleman, Ulric, who went and bragged about her perfection at the court, defying the whole world to win her affections away from him during his absence,' said Lefroy. 'A certain Count Rosemberg accepted the

challenge, and went and set about paying his addresses to the fair Barberine, who—locked him up in the guard-room with her spinning-wheel, and made him the laughing-stock of the whole court.'

'Woman and virtue triumphant, you see,' said Norbert approvingly.

'Ah, yes; but the adventurer was such an idiot. As for Ulric, I consider him the most wretched and infatuated coxcomb on record; and he would only have had himself to blame if things had gone differently and Barberine's heart been touched. Such a superhuman strength of mind as that is more than one person has any right to exact from another. Nor do I see what should forbid us to dip into any passing interest or enjoyment that may come within our reach.'

'Aha, I see; you think it better to go on skimming the surface of things, and never to anchor anywhere.'

'Yes,' said Lefroy pensively. 'Your humming-bird hawk-moth is the wise fellow. See him hovering round all the flowers in turn, never settling; he just whips out the honey and whirrs on.'

'Bah!' said Norbert good-humouredly; 'a fig for the vagabond! Depend upon it, the flies and bees have the best of it; know more of what sweets the flower-garden has got to give.'

'Yes, and what it can take,' said Lefroy gently. 'On the one hand there are the honeysuckers you speak of; but on the other, aren't there insectivorous flowers, with a fancy for sucking the life out of the wretched neck-or-nothing bees and flies that fasten upon them?'

'You've an answer for everything,' said Norbert, laughing. 'Why, you would talk a fellow into housebreaking or cutting

throats, as soon as take a walk;' and Lefroy smiled complacently, feeling he had received a compliment.

He was reminded of their dialogue the next morning, when the post brought him a letter from Mrs. de Saumarez, four pages of amusing *persiflage*, such as no men could read without smiling; the upshot of it was an invitation to come down to Monks' Orchard for a few weeks in the beginning of June.

Lefroy smiled again as he folded it up neatly, thinking. 'I shall see Barberine,' he said to himself, and sighed. 'Good opportunity to ascertain for myself how far my friend Norbert's obstinate confidence is warranted.' The proposed visit chanced to suit his plans perfectly, and he wrote off an acceptance at once.

That day Norbert's happiness rose far above Lewis Lefroy's highest felicity mark. He had to run up to London to see his chief, and had arranged his time so as to spend a few hours at Fernswold in returning. He meant to go on thence by the night-train and get back to his grindstone the next morning. His mood was that of a man with a guaranteed pleasure before him, and when the sheer delight of the anticipation is enough to sweeten impatience. Mr. Marriott, when they met in town, was thoroughly pleased with him. His nephew was an altered man since this engagement—ready, apt, methodical, by comparison, well up to the mark in every respect. The banker was all concessions and generosity. July, he hoped and intimated, would see the young people married and established. Norbert left for Lullington with a hundred pleasant things to tell Cressida. There was a house to which she had taken a fancy, and of which,

thanks to strenuous exertions on Mr. Marriott's part, they seemed likely to have the offer; the date of his liberation from his present onerous post was now certain. He was in his gayest, boyish humour, only cursing the stress of business which cut his visit so short.

Cressida's sentiments, meanwhile, seemed to her to be progressing and developing with strange and alarming rapidity. Surely she has lived through three lives in as many days. Norbert's telegram giving notice of his advent forty-eight hours hence had brought things to a climax. He was coming—which meant, she knew, that she would be called upon to talk over and decide matters that dragged their engagement down from cloudland, where it could be kept no longer. She would be spared nothing, have to realise it in twenty ways, probably to fix the week when the wedding should be!

Her brain was in a whirl the next morning. She could not keep still and at home. Knowing Alec to be off the scene that day—he had gone up to London for some racing engagement—she went over to Monks' Orchard, and spent the morning with Elise. *She* was all for the marriage, and might, thought Cressida dimly, throw cold water on this ferment and quench it. Unluckily Mrs. de Saumarez' homilies to-day had the very reverse effect to that intended. Her advocacy of the match was steadier than ever; but the whys and wherefores were also more outspoken; whilst for Cressida the last touches of pretty, false colouring disguising the picture were being ruthlessly obliterated, and it stood before her in the most unlovely tints imaginable. Elise remarked on her low spirits, and

was commiserating at first, inquiring whether Norbert was exacting, or unreasonable, or worried her with petty tempers or jealousies.

'He has no idea but what I am perfectly happy,' she replied. 'He thinks naturally that as outward things are unchanged, all is smooth. That is the worst of it, that he should deceive himself so.'

'Or the best, rather,' said Elise provokingly, but with her usual infusion of the serious into her banter. 'It appears to me that the young man has some of the most valuable qualities I know, and that you could hardly have chanced better, Cressida. Some people go through life in a dream; they are always happy, and make admirable husbands. Mr. Alleyne is clearly exceptionably adapted for his present post, and I do not see that even you will have much difficulty in making him happy—ever after.'

Because he is so easily taken in, did she mean? A conclusion for which, even in theory, Cressida was not yet ripe, and she raised her eyes in some indignation.

They were just at this point when the post came in with a letter that created a diversion.

'From Halliday, actually,' said Elise, with pleased surprise in her emphasis, and a tinge of malice too. 'Let us hear his news. Why, he dates from Alexandria!'

She began to read to herself, tantalising Cressida by an expression of countenance that seemed to hint 'private and confidential,' and only vouchsafing here and there an extract aloud. '"My long silence—unavoidable—plans upset. When I left, you warned me I should not stay away more than six months. It was Cassandra prophesying; so of course I never believed you. . . . My companion has had a touch of

fever, which has decided our plans in your favour. . . . Expect to reach England in June; hope to see you shortly. You will not find me a convert to the religion of the Great Pyramid, nor even to Mahomet's ideas of Paradise;—will undertake not to mention the Nile or the Sphinx, but to be as little of a bore as can reasonably be expected of a traveller just returned from the East." Desires to be remembered to you, Cressida; seems perplexed at not having yet heard of your marriage.'

'That is good news,' resumed Elise, when she had finished reading. 'I shall be glad to see him here about that time; he will do to meet the people I have coming very well. I must write and tell him I do not mean to let him off.'

Cressida did not say a word. She fully believed she was indifferent on the subject, having schooled herself the last six months to think and talk of him as coolly as if he were a mere lay figure to her. It was significant, it was humiliating, that this token, that these few formal words from the man himself, should have power to add still further to her present perturbation. It sent her home pensive, it kept her wakeful all night long, and of that night she found no good counsel to take.

The next afternoon came, and she sat awaiting Norbert's ring with nervously clasped hands, pale face, and dark circles under her eyes. She had brought herself that morning to face the immediate worst, in imagination. To break it off. It did not sound so dreadful. Girls by the dozen changed their mind, and nobody thought seriously the worse of them, nor did they suffer for it afterwards. It was a mere peccadillo—not a crime that she should shrink from it. No lovers of this generation were inconsolable.

Romeos are as out of date as the cave man. Why, the real wrong towards Norbert would be to marry him in her present state of mind. Grant that she has taken a deplorable, false step, the farther she goes now the harder it will be to retrieve, and the more outward things bring her engagement home to her mind, the more impossible, the more inconceivable, it seems that she could ever, ever fulfil it.

The spark of loyalty that was the redeeming point in her feeling towards her boy-lover made her turn against herself; and Elise's philosophy of marriage, here applied, revolted her as the acme of fiendish iniquity.

She will be indifferent first, miserable next, reckless afterwards. Only by a refined hypocrisy will she succeed in concealing it from him. His misery seems to follow as a matter of course. Is it not her bounden duty not to expose their two lives to such havoc with her eyes open?

In the midst of her cross-questionings the bell rang. Norbert doubtless. Will she have courage to say anything of what is in her mind? She is not sure, and nerves herself as if for a literal trial of strength.

Not yet; there is a delay, a servant's parley in the passage, and presently enter the maid-servant, bearing an enormous flower-pot in her arms.

It is only Alec's debt of honour duly discharged, with a tiny note accompanying it. The shrub is placed in the window-recess, and Cressida breaks open the note with a certain trepidation.

It brings the colour to her cheek as she reads; but she has barely had time to cast her eye over his characteristic composition when enter Norbert in reality.

Alec's audacious note is thrust anywhere, out of sight, if only it

could be out of the world, and the flush fades suddenly as she goes to welcome her *promesso sposo*, has changed to an unnatural whiteness as they stand with clasped hands.

Cressida drew him towards the sofa. There they sat talking, Norbert so glad to be there again that he never noticed her momentary pallor nor her curious gravity. Cressida's heart sank lower and lower. The first instant had brought with it the dead certainty, which every minute was confirming, that she would never have the courage to speak out and undeceive him. She dared not ask herself just now how he might take it; but 'terribly cut up' he *must* be, and she was not accustomed to brave disagreeables, had never consciously and deliberately inflicted a wound or been cruel. And Norbert was not like other men. To hurt him was like hurting a child or a bird. One could not bring one's hand to do it. Again, to cut the knot between them for ever, after voluntarily assuming the chief part in his life, determining him to turn his back on the sphere where all his other hopes and wishes lay, would be such a shameful admission of meanness and heartlessness on her part. What, make a confession that amounted to this?—'I was bound to you by the strongest ties of friendship and sympathy. Yet it was for your uncle's money that I accepted your love, let you believe it was dear to me, making you shape your life in order to satisfy my vanity and ambition. It is time you should know this; for just as I played false with you then, I shall not keep faith with you now.'

O, never! There was a self-humiliation in that which she could not bear. Better anything. Better go through with it, shut

her eyes, wait at least. For chance might help her, free her, some way. She might die, or Norbert, or Mr. Marriott's bank might smash—there was a crisis just now in the commercial world, she believed. Anything seemed more thinkable than that Norbert and she should become man and wife, or that little Cressida, so well beloved by everybody, should make herself odious in the sight of men and angels.

That boy loved her as none in the wide world would ever love her again. That she knew; and the sense of it, and of the rocks ahead upon which he or she or both were drifting, subdued her strangely. Her manner to him was even more gentle and tender than usual; a feeling of profound sadness and pity possessed her. The trouble on her mind seemed to raise her to seriousness, and to soften her, freeing her from self-consciousness and trivialities, and Norbert thought her divine.

'How cold your hand is!' he observed suddenly.

'Is it? One is always chilly after a bad night, you know. I was over-tired yesterday, and could not sleep.'

She rose quickly, withdrawing her hand, walked to the window, and mechanically, without thinking, bent down over the lily to smell it.

'What a gorgeous flower!' observed Norbert, who had not noticed it, or anything, till this moment. 'Where does it come from?'

'Monks' Orchard,' replied Cressida briefly.

'By the way, I hear they are going to be tremendously gay there next month. So Lefroy says; he's coming down, you know. What do you think of it all?'

'That I wish you were going to be there, instead of Mr. Lefroy,'

said Cressida very sincerely, with a little shiver.

'Ah, that's quite impossible, I'm sorry to say,' said Norbert, with resignation. He *was* sorry, if Cressida would have liked to have him there; but so far as balls and merry meetings of that sort were concerned, he was thankful to be out of them.

'Really impossible?' repeated Cressida wistfully.

'Why, yes! I have my hands quite full for this month and next. The senior clerk has been ill, and that means double work and responsibility for me. But in another six weeks, Cressida, my probation ends. I have my uncle's word for it. You should have seen the old boy this morning—all smiles and soft sawder. I'm to have a long holiday, and the partnership soon. So in July, Cressida, we shall have only ourselves to think of; and we shall be inclined to be as selfish as we can, sha'n't we?'

Cressida raised her eyes. Her heart seemed to have stood still. Is this the moment to say, 'I have been cheating you, or helping you to cheat yourself—taking everything from you, with nothing real to give in return. I was your friend once; but from the day when I promised to marry you, I became your enemy, the worst you ever had. I shrink from fulfilling my word, for your sake as well as mine?'

She looked at him, tried, or fancied she tried, to speak, but the words stuck in her throat. She thought of his joyless home, his ill-starred life, his strange, passionate, clinging nature, his sacrifice to her. Surely these would haunt her for ever! O, it would be easier to pluck out her own eye, she thinks, than to be Norbert's executioner.

So she wavers and waits, looking as sweet as Elaine and beguiling as Vivien. It is habit with her—she does not know how to look otherwise. Her face betrays no clue that could disquiet her lover. Suddenly Mr. Landon breaks in upon them. Cressida breathes freely again. It is a reprieve, she thinks. Ay, but her chance is gone.

Norbert left by the night-train. Cressida thinks it will be easier to write. But when she sits down and takes up the pen a thousand fresh hesitations start up—much generous compunction for her lover, but still more on her own account. Her imagination runs on, and she sees herself in a far worse plight than before her engagement—poor as ever, dull as ever, and marked as a jilt.

'I do not care what happens to me,' she exclaimed; 'but I cannot—Elise was right. It is folly my trying to turn back. I shall let it come. Till then, the best is not to see or to think.'

AN AMEER'S FÊTE.

It takes place in Hyderabad, the Nizam's capital, and the giver is the Ameer, Vickar-Ool-Oomerah. A swell among swells is this self-same Ameer: the Nizam's uncle, one of the regents, and with the bluest of blue blood in his Mohammedan veins. A very Rothschild, too, in wealth; with jewels of gold and jewels of silver, and with diamonds, emeralds, and other precious stones, worth many a king's ransom. His palace, the Barra Durry, in the very heart of the dirty city, is rich in crystal, upholstery, and articles of *virtù*; and as he is of a scientific turn he has a room or two furnished with elaborate mechanical toys, the machinery of which he delights to set in motion, and with valuable philosophical instruments, which, however, he handles cautiously since the day when, it is said, he mistook a charged Leyden jar for a big bottle of French plums. Extensive jagheers call him lord and master, and thousands of dependents salaam and rub their noses in the dust in his presence. He has horses of pure Arab breed, elephants, camels, oxen; and herds of sheep, goats, and swine—no, not the unclean animal, by the way; the Prophet forbid that!—graze over his far-stretching pastures. How many long sonorous appellations he has in addition to that of Ameer, I know not—I believe that they are as numerous as unpronounceable—but this I do know, that in the military cantonments of the Hyderabad subsidiary force these designations are dropped, and the

old gentleman is known and called by the simple sacerdotal title of The Vicar.

The gilt carded invitations he has issued to us, the officers of the said force for the *fête*, name the unreasonably early hour of 6 p.m. for assembling, and it is therefore blazingly hot when we leave our bungalows in Secunderabad, Begumpett, Bolarum, for the five or six miles between us and the city-gates. We men are in all the glory of scarlet and gold; our ladykind in evening toilettes; and the slanting rays of the setting sun are playing mischief with fair faces and *décolletées* shoulders, they are fast becoming 'ruddier than the cherry.' We travel over the dusty and nasty smelling roads between cantonment and Hyderabad, either in hired ramshackled gharries and bullock-coaches or in our own phaetons, mail-carts, wagonettes, drags—all those nondescript vehicles which make their appearance on special occasions from the compounds of a large Indian up-country station. Some of these carriages are of modern fashion, and of English or Presidency build; Long Acre or Madras or Bombay may honestly lay claim to their original design and construction. Others again are antediluvian in style and form, may possibly have belonged to Arthur, first Duke of Wellington, when he was quartered hereabouts, or to Monsieur le Général Raymond when he was waging war in these parts, and even then may have sprung into shape from the back shed of a

local native coachwright. Ditto our horses. Some are Arabs or Walers, young, fresh, satin-skinned, worth hundreds of gold mohurs; whereas others are 'screws' or 'casters' from the cavalry and artillery, old and worn out, spavined, broken-kneed, ungroomed, and buyable for a handful or two of the thick, heavy, badly-coined silver halli-sicca rupee of the Nizam's dominions. But somehow or another we jog along; the jogging, however, decidedly of the worst to those of us who happen to be in bullock-coaches belonging to native hirers drawn by a pair of Deccan-raised bullocks. No uncomfortable style of travelling is your roomy, well-cushioned, springy bullock-coach, with a pair of large fast-trotting Mysore bullocks; but the vehicle of the same type called a *nibb*, narrow, low, hard as to its seats, almost springless, and with two small, slow, obstinate *byles* (bullocks), which a garmentless and odoriferous Tamil or Hindoo Jehu has at every step to force along with much 'cluck-clucking' from his mouth, and with more, much more, tail-twisting and whip-thonging from his never-resting arms—I do not know in existence a more tiresome and heart-breaking means of locomotion. And so, passing through bazaars and by chowkees (stations), where the green crescent standard is hoisted, and where parties of the Nizam's police salute us deferentially, we cross the bridged river Moosah, drive through the arched gateway of the tumbling-to-pieces fortifications, and are presently within the city of Hyderabad. Here we alight from our carriages, for the streets, or rather lanes, of the town leading to the Ameer's palace are much too narrow for 'wheels,' and the palanquins and elephants awaiting must take us

on. The former mode of conveyance is, we see at a glance, at a discount, and especially among our gentler sex—entrance into it, for them, is neither graceful nor pretty, back hair is apt to be disarranged and dainty skirts crushed and tumbled, besides which companionship is out of the question. But in the howdah on the elephant's back, a ride—and to tell the truth somewhat of a squeeze in close sitting with a gay cavalier—is not only popular and pleasant, but quite the allowable transit by dear old Mrs. Grundy, whose eyes are sharp, and tongue sharper, in an Indian station. So, *à bas* the palanquin, *en haut* the howdah; and as the huge beast bearing it kneels, up we—cavalier and dame aforesaid—clamber, hold fast, when, from a touch of the mahout, he rises, and off we go, Indian file, with a ship-in-a-short-head-sea kind of motion, staring into the verandahs of houses on either hand; looking out for Mohammedan beauties whom we do not see; passing squalid beggars of both sexes and all ages, clamorous for backsheesh in the shape of the copper cube dub of the Nizam's coin; hearing jerky syllables, which sound uncommonly like maledictions on our infidel heads; and seeing villanous-looking Arabs with loaded matchlocks and lighted fuses sprawling on steps and thresholds, quite within touching distance of their firearms, ready, if they dared, to pot the dogs of Christians as they passed. On, through the close, narrow, miry streets, inhaling one moment an odour not altogether disagreeable of curry—stuffs, spices, fruits, and aromatic herbs, and at the next—ugh!—an atmosphere in which sewer-gas is about the most pleasant-smelling component. O Richardson of Hygieo-

polis, how much art thou needed in the Nizam's capital ! Presently we pass the imposing mosque, with its picturesque minarets ; a little further, and our *cortège* turns up a very narrow and, if possible, more nasty-smelling passage ; and just as we are wondering where the deuce this filthy strait leads to we enter large gates, and find ourselves in the spacious quadrangle of the Barra Durry. Trumpets sounding a most discordant flourish, drums beating a terribly flat tattoo, and a band playing 'God save the Queen' without any regard to time or air, greet our *entrée*. A guard of honour, formed on one side of Sepoys, and on the other of nondescript warriors, the like of which we have never cast eyes on before, and who are quite beyond our military ken, receive us with such a loose and irregular 'present arms' as would drive F.M. the Duke of Cambridge stark-staring mad. There is no mistaking the company on the right : there is the Leadenhall-street scarlet coatee, the white trousers, the turban, the sandals, served out when this century was young, by dear old John Company to his Madras native army ; served out, worn out, discarded, then bought by the Vicar, to clothe his vassals. Yes ; there are the pipe-clayed cross-belts, and the Tower of London marked Brown Bess musket. The identity and sex of this body is certain enough. But who on earth, and what on earth, are the troops on the left ? We see them clothed in green tunics and pantaloons ; they are turbaned and sandalled ; armed too with rifles, lances, and swords ; their figures are well developed pectorally, and inclining to *embonpoint*. Generally they seem to need the drill-sergeant, and certainly to call for more rigid discipline under arms ; for

while they stand at 'attention,' and are supposed to be saluting us, two small children, one quite in ebon nudity, and the other with nothing on worth mentioning, are running in and between the 'files' playing. Playing ? with whom ? Why, with their mammas and sisters of course ; for this guard, which has so puzzled us, is composed entirely of women—the Ameer's amazons, kept to protect his zenana, and of which—the troops, not the harem—he is remarkably proud. Between these two lines of male and female soldiery our elephants tramp ; down they kneel at the base of a flight of steps ; we descend, and are in the presence of our host. He stands on his threshold with his family—bar the womenkind, who, of course, do not show—around him. He is well into the sere and yellow leaf, looks as if he had led a fast life in the gay city of Hyderabad, and burnt the candle not only at both ends, but a good deal in the middle also. His own apparel is plain and simple enough, but that of his kith and kin gorgeous. Rich and rare are the gems they wear, splendid are their jewelled buttons, buckles, belts, sword and dagger hilts—their rings, watches, and charms, attached to massive gold chains, and worn outside their velvet and fine cloth gaberdines. Restrain it as we will, the idea will crop up, What a glorious haul of loot there would be were Hyderabad and the Ameer's Barra Durry and surroundings given up to that luxury, if 'Stand and deliver !' could be said to that young copper-coloured gentleman with the string of Orient pearls around his neck, or to him a shade or two lighter in complexion, who is fiddling with the Golconda diamonds in his coat studs and fastenings ! I can see by her face

how 'fetching' that emerald pendent hanging from a boy Nawab's throat has become to that dark-haired lady of 'ours,' how she yearns to see it resting on her own bosom, and how fatal will be her indignation with the man she calls lord if that same gem is not hers when Hyderabad is sacked. I note all this as the Ameer comes forward to receive us. He shakes hands—'Europe fashion'—with all, all but the British Resident at the Nizam's Court—one of his guests—but for that swell official he has a much more demonstrative welcome, a greeting bordering on the affectionate and decidedly, to us bystanders, on the ludicrous. The two dignitaries advance, they are close together; twice they open arms right and left, put them over each other's shoulders and make a feint of embracing, and twice they seem just upon the point of kissing, but to think better of it at the last moment. As far as our representative is concerned, we are rather glad that the kiss has not been completed: native dishes, as a rule, are highly spiced with full-flavoured condiments. Now walk into the halls and saloons of a magnificent palace solid with marble and Parian, rich with gold and colour, brilliant with crystal, and garnished with furniture of London and Parisian make. We glance at cabinets containing the clockwork figures our host rejoices in. Soon we hear the familiar 'Roast Beef of Old England' sounding from a full military band, announcing that 'the wittles is up;' and we enter a spacious banqueting-hall, enter how we please and escorting any one we like—all but the Resident again, who leads the way, hooked on to the fleshless arm of the Vicar. The dinner is *à la Russe* and of the best, and the delicate edibles of Fortnum and Mason

and the glorious vintages of Gesler and Roederer are lavishly abundant. In the intervals of our repast, and while listening to Rossini or Gounod or Offenbach, well rendered by the Nizam's band, we watch young Hyderabad feed, and we are lost in astonishment at his capacity for quantity and variety of food. Will he never, we think, 'feel as if his jacket was buttoned'? Faithful Mohammedan Jeames or Chawles behind his chair loads his plate with flesh, fowl, and fruit at one and the same time, and seems pained when noble young nawab or rajah does not make clean the platter, but which in truth he seldom fails to do. But though he crams to repletion, he drinks not, save cool sherbet or pure iced water. Not so we! The Ameer's champagne, burgundy, claret, his b. - and - s. find way, frequent way, down our parched throats; for the night is hot, the room not well punkahed, the coolies behind with the large fans sleepy and sluggish, and the sitting is 'awfully' prolonged and wearisome. But it is over at last, and Resident and Ameer still arm-locked and leading, we stroll into an open court, with couches and chairs arranged in a semi-circle, and with a snowy cloth stretched on the ground in front. Those of us unused to city parties hail these preparations as omens of a dance, and have visions of 'jolly' waltzes and galops with fair partners on our arms. Alas for our disappointment! your stolid Asiatic, Jeypore of quadrille notoriety excepted, will be danced to, but, like the Tenth of old, 'don't dance.' 'Why, then, if not for a hop, the chalked white calico, and the seats for chaperones and wallflowers?' The nautch—the 'naughty nautch,' as Aliph Cheem calls it in his inimitable *Lays of Ind*—is on, and the dancing-girls

are about to give us a taste of their quality. I am not going to describe this performance; friend A. C. afore named has already done so in most delectable verse. Enough to say that for an hour or more we are a wearied and a yawning audience; that we soon have got tired of looking at the gold-embroidered robes, jewels, nose, ear, and toe rings of not very young or peculiarly good-looking copper-faced damsels; that we have failed to see grace or the poetry of motion in their hand-wavings, feet-shufflings and other movements; that few of us have understood six lines of the long love-poem they have been reciting; that we have anathematised the shrill squeak of the pipes and the monotonous beat of the tom-toms of their band; that we have put down the whole affair as 'awfully slow,' and agreed that a London ballet, with its less draped *danseuses*, is a livelier exhibition.

Then we wonder how it comes to pass that the Oriental grandees will spend so much money, and be so much entertained by these dancing-girls and their vapid meaningless gyrations. But we hear it whispered that this is really no nauch at all, as we have seen it; that the exhibition the native delights in, and pays so many rupees for, is when European ladies and gentlemen are not present.

The *corps de ballet* disposed of, we again follow the Ameer and the Resident, who apparently have never let go of each other, to another courtyard, where fireworks, without which no Hyderabad *fête* is complete, is the next item of the bill of fare in the evening's *tamasha*. And a disastrous item it was; for while rockets and all kinds of pyrotechnics are flying and fizzing

and whirring and bursting out flame for our gratification, while 'villanous saltpetre' is smelling in our noses, while we are admiring the expert art of the native Brock, and thinking what a haul he is making out of our friend the Vicar's coffers—bang! there is a report as loud as that of the eighty-one-ton gun, and shrieks and cries follow. We rush to see 'what's up,' and find that an old honey-combed mortar, used for discharging some kind of firework, has burst, and has killed and wounded a score at least of a thick crowd standing around it. Surgery cannot do much for most of the poor fellows lying about. Many are dead, more mutilated and dying; a few have got off comparatively cheaply with contusions and fractures. These latter are sent at once to the Government Hospital. The former their friends remove, not without very high-pitched lamentations; for your Eastern mourners, the ladies in particular, are demonstrative in grief. These widows the Ameer will have to provide for, and though he will do it willingly, it will not cost him a fortune; for it is remarkable how few rupees will satisfy madame, the native relict, for the loss of her husband.

And now of course the *fête* ends, the big crowd disperses, and we too wish the Ameer good-night. We receive from his hands the accustomed nuzzur (present) of wee vials of ottar of rose, the number given rated according to rank; we remount our elephants, traverse by torchlight the quiet, but still full-flavoured, perhaps even more full-flavoured, streets of the city; regain our vehicles, return to cantonments; and Vickar-Ool-Oomerah's *fête*, and even its *finale*, are forgotten in dreamland.

THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW WE ALL MADE OURSELVES USEFUL ACCORDING TO OUR ABILITY.

THE trap into which we had fallen could not have been set long, for the grass-roots hanging from the roof were still fresh. The floor was smooth and very clean. There was a round hole in the centre, and I thought to myself that this would be the only spot through which we could hope to escape—at least, that I could; for the spider could easily go up with the aid of a thread to one or the other entrance of the broken gallery. She might even take the glowworm with her; but as for me, I was much too heavy: and even supposing the thread to be strong enough to bear me, I felt that it would be quite impossible for me to climb it, for I was not accustomed to that kind of exercise, nor was I so constituted as to be able to attempt it with any chance of success.

I approached the hole alluded to, and began to remove the earth which stopped it up. This did not take long, for my claws soon came in contact with an insurmountable obstacle, and I discovered with horror that the pot rested on a stone, so that it was quite impossible to get out that way.

'You must know,' observed the spider, 'that the trap being set for mole crickets, who can burrow in the ground with the greatest ease, it was absolutely necessary to take that preliminary precaution to prevent them from escaping through the hole.'

'But how ever am I to get out?'

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'Leave that to me,' added the spider; 'that's my business. The first thing to be decided is, which of the two passages you will take. For my part, I think it will be imprudent to go back to the one through which we came. We might run into the very jaws of the mole. I am disposed to give the preference to the other. We don't know where it goes to; but it seems to be the safer of the two. What do you think?'

'I am quite of your opinion.'

'And you, Firefly?'

'I agree with you too. I place myself entirely under your guidance.'

'Well, as we are of one mind, let's set to work without delay.'

As she spoke, the spider threw a thread towards the opening we had chosen, and, having fastened the other end to the ground, she clung to it, and strengthened it with a second. She then went up and down again and again, each time adding one thread to the others, till she considered the kind of rope she had made to be strong enough. That done, she spun a second thread parallel with and at a short distance from the first, strengthening it in the same fashion. I watched her at work with an interest which will be readily understood. When she had finished her two parallel ropes, she connected them by cross-threads laid horizontally.

'Ah!' I cried, 'a ladder!'

'What do you think of my idea?'

'It's brilliant, and I admire your ingenuity.'

'You see,' she went on, 'I did well to cling to you in our flight. Your speed saved me, and one good turn deserves another. Firefly helps us too, for without his lamp we could not see how to make our escape.'

All the time she was talking the spider was working away at her web with extraordinary zeal, and it was very soon completed.

'Now then, forwards!' she cried joyfully. 'But wait a minute, whilst I carry up Firefly; it won't take an instant, and you will see better how to climb up.'

The glowworm's ascent was the work of a moment, and once up he settled on the edge of the pot near the passage, against which rested the ladder, and turned his lamp round so as fully to light it up.

I began to ascend. The spider had had the forethought to fasten a strong thread round my body, the other end of which she had fastened to one of the beams of the ceiling. By its means she hoisted me up, and with this assistance I managed without too much difficulty to reach the last round of the ladder. We were soon all three together on the upper edge of the pot, ready to enter the unknown passage, at the further end of which we hoped to find ourselves in safety.

The passage was too narrow for us to march abreast, and after a short consultation it was decided that Firefly should lead the way and light our steps. I was to follow, to overturn any obstacles which should present themselves, and the spider was to bring up the rear.

'Let us agree how to act in case of an alarm,' I said; 'so that we may not lose our presence of mind. You, Epeira' (it will be remem-

bered that our companion belonged to that family of spiders)—'you, Epeira, have nothing to fear; we cannot be attacked from behind. If any enemy presents himself, it will be in front; in that case, Firefly, turn round at once and slip behind me. I undertake to bear the brunt of the attack. As the best armed and the strongest of us three, that duty devolves on me.'

Truth to tell, I made a mental reservation when I suggested this order of march, which it would never have done to confide to my companions. We might wander about a long time in these subterranean passages without food, or the possibility of procuring any; in a word, Firefly was a feeble creature, and spiders have bad reputations. Thus far our companion had been very kind to him; she had saved his life in our precipitous flight, and I liked to believe that her motive was gratitude for the service which had been rendered to her by him, rather than a wish to secure a necessary light. Still, hunger is imperative and a bad counsellor—at least, with some natures; and who could tell that we might not soon be enduring the pangs of famine?

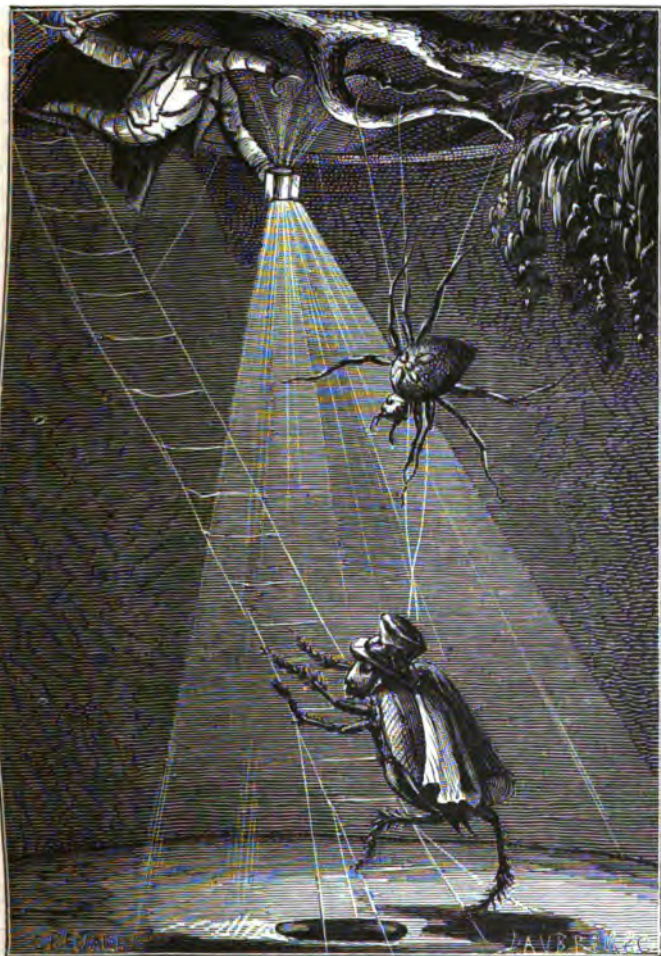
By sending Firefly in advance, and making the spider go behind, I protected the latter from the danger of committing in a moment of oblivion an act on every account to be deprecated.

Everything was settled according to my suggestions; the glowworm led the way and entered the passage. I followed him, and the spider followed me. We went on for some little time in silence. The passage, though wide enough for me to walk with comfort, was not sufficiently so for me to be able to turn round, should occasion arise for doing so. It was very tortuous and uneven, and it

seemed to me to slope very much to the left, though its irregularity made it difficult to determine its exact direction.

We had been walking thus for some minutes when, in crossing a

spot where the earth was rather loose, one of my legs sank right in, and, the ground suddenly giving way beneath me, I was flung with the loose soil into a hollow which was fortunately not



very deep. At the cry I gave as I fell Firefly hurried back, and we were able to make out the cause of the accident. I had fallen into a vast gallery, which here ran under our passage, from which it was only separated by a thin layer of earth, and this layer had

been broken by the weight of my body.

The same idea struck us all at once. This vast gallery was one of the mole's roads.

It was dangerous and altogether useless to linger where we were. With the aid of my comrades I

therefore regained the passage, a work of little difficulty, and we resumed our march.

A fresh *contretemps*, and one of a more disagreeable nature, however, occurred a little further on. Our passage, after turning abruptly to the left, led into the very gallery into which I had fallen.

We stopped and consulted as to what had better be done. The spider carefully examined the place, and appeared to reflect.

'It is evident,' she said presently, 'that the mole cricket did not pierce her passage as we find it to-day, or make it lead into this gallery, for fun. The latter is probably of more recent construction, and the passage has been cut across. We shall doubtless find its continuation in the wall opposite to us.'

This supposition seemed reasonable. After having listened for some time to make sure that the gallery was empty, I therefore followed the direction of the passage, which here described an acute angle, and I examined the opposite wall, expecting to find a wide opening in it. I was disappointed, and told my companions so.

'You must be mistaken,' said the spider. 'Come, we can easily find out the right way to go. Here, Firefly, turn round and go back.'

Firefly did as he was requested, and just as he was disappearing round the next corner the spider cried, 'Stop!'

The gallery was absolutely dark, except for a luminous spot on the wall opposite to the one against which we stood. The spider pointed out the spot to me, and said,

'There, that is where we ought to find the continuation of our passage. Dig there, cricket.'

I set to work, but in vain I dug

and burrowed in the ground, sinking into it up to my shoulders; no hollow did I find.

It seemed probable that at the place to which we had penetrated the passage made a turn, and followed the same direction as the mole's gallery. In that case it was useless to hunt for it any longer; there was nothing to be done but to follow the gallery itself, in spite of the unpleasant encounters we might expect in it.

These reflections, which the spider made *sotto voce*, and as it were aside, were shared by myself.

Such was the situation when rapid footsteps were heard in the gallery a little distance off.

'Quick, to the passage!' cried the spider, clutching at my tail.

But before reaching it I was knocked down by some animal running rapidly past. It was a little field mouse, and judging by the increased speed of its flight, I think its terror on striking me was no less than ours.

'What a shock! I thought it was a shrew.'

'Come,' said the spider, 'let's follow him; there is nothing else to be done. As long as he does not turn back we may make sure that the passage is free to him, and there will be no fear of our walking blindly into the jaws of a mole. If he passes again we will take counsel together. Come, Firefly.'

I was struck by the justice of the spider's supposition, and with him and the glowworm clutching on to the two ends of my tail for the sake of advancing more rapidly, I set off at a trot, as the width of the path allowed of my adopting that pace.

Presently I stopped to take breath, saying,

'Have you any idea of the time?'

'It is breakfast-time!' sighed Firefly sadly.

That was exactly my own opinion, but the mole cricket was no longer there to get us food. Before we could breakfast we must get out of this interminable subterranean passage.

‘Forward, my friends!’

I resumed my course, still towing my companions. We soon came to a bifurcation of the gallery. I again stopped.

‘We will follow the trace of the field mouse, that will be our best way,’ said the spider.

As she spoke she carefully examined the ground. I saw her enter first one and then the other of the two galleries before her; then she called the glowworm, and begging him to make his lamp shine more brightly, she continued her examination, walking slowly and appearing undecided.

‘Well?’ I inquired.

‘It is strange,’ she said: ‘thus far the animal’s track has been single; but now the traces of its passage are numerous and confused in both branches of the gallery. I think he must have met with some obstacle in one of the passages, and turned back to try the other. That of course would be simple enough; but what complicates the matter is that he has apparently been unable to advance in the second either. The mouse seems to have run backwards and forwards several times in both of the paths before us.’

‘What do you gather from that?’

‘I really don’t know what to think.’

‘Might there not be a mole in one of the passages?’

‘No; the mouse would not have run against it a second and a third time.’

‘What shall we do?’

‘We will go on at all risks. What other course is open to us? Perhaps what was an insurmountable obstacle to the mouse would

not be so to us. First of all we have light; and secondly, we are so much smaller that we might slip through where he could not. Let’s go to the left; the path seems to lead up, and we want to get towards the surface of the ground.’

We took the path on the left, but we did not go far. At a little distance from its opening the passage ended in a blind alley. We retraced our steps and tried the other. That led down rather abruptly, and we had not been in it a minute before an unexpected obstacle brought us up short, and at the same time explained the running backwards and forwards of the mouse, of which the marks on the ground gave proof. The gallery was full of water—a fact easily explained by the nature of the soil, which consisted of compact impermeable clay. The water was probably part of the heavy rain which had fallen a few nights before. We exchanged looks of great disappointment.

‘If the gallery continues to slope downwards,’ said the spider, ‘the water must reach nearly to the top. But if it goes up a little distance from here, perhaps we can pass.’

‘It seems to me,’ I said, ‘that where the mouse has passed we may do the same. Don’t you think so?’

‘Yes, of course, if the mouse has passed at all; but that remains to be proved.’

‘If he had retraced his steps, we should have met him.’

‘He may have turned round whilst we were in the passage on the left. In any case I am going to see how the matter stands. Wait for me here.’

With this the spider spun a thread above the water towards the roof of the passage, and we soon saw her disappear in the darkness, clinging to it.

Some little time elapsed before

she returned. At last she reappeared.

'We can pass,' she said; 'the gallery runs up further on. The passage will be rather difficult towards the middle, but it is practicable, which is the main point. You're not afraid of getting wet?'

'Not a bit,' we replied.

'But how about your lamp,

Firefly—is there any danger of its going out?'

'Not the least; it's proof against submersion.'

'All is well, then, and this is what we have to do. You, Firefly, clutch hold of the cricket's shoulders, and don't let go whatever happens. As for you, cricket, I am going to fasten a thread



round your neck, and at a signal I shall give you are to go into the water until you are out of your depth. Leave the rest to me. Only take care when you are floating to draw your limbs together, so as not to risk striking against the walls of the passage. If such a *contretemps* should occur, the thread by which I mean to pull you up might break, and that would lead to complications.'

Everything was done according to the instructions of the spider. She then suspended herself to the thread which she had spun along the top of the passage, and at the word 'forwards' pronounced by her I entered the water, through which I walked as long as I felt any ground beneath my feet. That

soon failed me, and I then drew up my legs and held my breath. The washing of the water against my body showed me that we were advancing, towed by the spider. For one moment I seemed to glide to the bottom and to remain stationary. I thought the thread had broken, and you can imagine the terror which seized me. Fortunately, however, my anxiety did not last long. I again felt the thread dragging me on, and a few instants afterwards I was able to put my feet to the ground. We were soon out of the water.

'What was the matter in the middle of the journey?' I inquired of the spider. 'I thought for a minute that we should not get to the other side.'

'One of the fastenings of my thread to the ceiling gave way, and I fell into the water myself. I managed to repair the mischief, though, and the dangerous transit is effected.'

Meanwhile the glowworm, whose lamp did not appear to have suffered from its wetting, was examining the ground.

'The mouse got over the difficulty too,' he said; 'here are the marks of his feet; they can be seen quite easily.'

Beyond this point the gallery continued to lead up.

'I noticed,' observed the spider, 'that where the water had got in the roof of the passage was not of earth, but of stone. The mole probably had to burrow

beneath it in order to pass it.'

We resumed our march. The footprints of the mouse, which were very clearly visible on the ground, encouraged us to hope that we should meet with no further obstacles.

This hope soon became certainty. In a few minutes we reached the end of our gallery, which we found led into a large subterranean chamber, to which the daylight penetrated. It was a rabbit-burrow, the entrance to which we could see a little distance off. We got out quickly enough, and it was with a feeling of intense relief that we gazed once more on the sun, then appearing in full glory above the horizon.



CHAPTER VIII.

A LESSON IN APPLIED GEOMETRY.

'THE next thing to be done is to get some breakfast,' said the spider. 'I shall spin a web at once on this currant-bush. Where shall I meet you again?'

'Here, of course. Don't you think that will be best? Firefly and I will go and look for food. In a quarter of an hour at the most we shall have satisfied our hunger, and then we will come back to you.'

'All right. I'll throw a thread from my web to that blade of grass near you. When you are back you can shake it to let me know, and I'll come to you.'

With that the spider went her way and Firefly his, whilst I remained at the entrance to the burrow to look about me, and ascertain whereabouts we were.

The result of my inspection was as follows: The burrow was situated on the borders of a wood growing on a little hill behind me. Before me and a short distance off was a strawberry-bed, sloping gently down to the wide path where I had narrowly escaped being crushed by a carriage the evening of my arrival. Beyond gleamed the waters of the pond. On the left and on a rather lower level I could see the iron gate through which I had made my entrance into the grounds. From the commanding position which I occupied I could see the whole of the house in the distance on the right. It was a fine building, with a flight of steps leading up to it, a verandah, and a turret on either side, surmounted by a weathercock.

It was not difficult to make out the exact spot where I had met the mole cricket, and where also

the entrance to her house was situated. The prolonged stay I had made there during the preceding days had rendered me familiar with all the surrounding objects. There was no doubt that it was down there, beside that bit of white stone on the edge of the path. We had traversed a great distance underground, and I congratulated myself on the fortunate termination of our adventure. This reflection suggested another, and I could not help laughing at the remembrance of the circular journey of an hour's duration which I had made in the gardener's trap.

Above me the spider was busily making her web. That reminded me that it was time I had some food. A few tender blades of grass soon appeased my hunger. That done, I espied a stone with a little hollow beneath it, and having assured myself that I could retreat to this natural refuge in case of necessity, I set myself down close to it, and watched the spider at work.

I had often seen spiders making their webs, but I had never before noticed how they set about the production of their first thread. I had now a good opportunity of satisfying my curiosity on that point. I therefore thus accosted my friend.

'Epeira,' I cried, 'just explain how it is that, though you were beside me a minute ago, you have managed to fasten a thread to that currant-bush without first climbing on to it?'

'Nothing could be easier,' she replied. 'First of all, you must know that in the end of my body I have a little sack filled with a

liquid, which instantaneously dries when I exude it, and is converted into long silken threads. Before it reaches the air, however, it has to pass through a great number of minute orifices. The thread which

looks to you single really consists of some hundreds of threads of extreme tenuity, which as they leave my body adhere and form the one you see.

‘Moreover, I can produce as



many fine threads from my spinnerets as I choose. When I want to stretch the first I make it invisible, and so light that it floats in the air at the mercy of the very faintest breeze. I spin it rapidly till it is of a great length, and soon its free end attaches itself to some

object, often at a great distance off. That done, I tighten this first thread, and from it I seek about for some other place to fasten the second. I proceed in the same manner with the third. I dispose them in the form of a triangle. I need not say that when my first

thread is stretched I strengthen it with others, and that I do so as I climb along it. When my large triangle is once formed, I cut off the angles by oblique threads to form a polygon, and it is within this polygon that I make the radii, and lastly the spiral which binds them together.'

I thanked the spider for her explanation. I had not quite understood the terms triangle, polygon, and spiral which she had used, but as I watched her at work I guessed their meaning. I had learnt what I most wished to know—how she managed to produce her first thread. Satisfied with my lesson, I began to sing to pass the time. I had just finished my third or fourth shake when I heard a voice from beneath the stone. I listened. It seemed as if some one were calling to me.

'Cricket!' murmured a stifled voice. 'Cricket!'

I drew back into the hollow and listened again.

'Cricket!'

The cry was more distinct.

'Who is there?' I said. 'Who calls me?'

'An unfortunate staphylinus buried alive and dying of hunger. Come and help me.'

'How can I help you?'

'By piercing a passage in the direction of my voice. I beseech you, for Heaven's sake, to do me this service.'

I hesitated for a moment. I had little enough in common with the staphylinidæ family. I did not think much of their restless, impudent, quarrelsome, and unsociable ways. However, my own happy and recent escape from a painful situation made me sympathise with the misfortunes of others. So my hesitation did not last long, and I began to burrow in the ground behind my hollow

in the direction from which proceeded the voice of the staphylinus.

I reached him in a few minutes. I then made my way out backwards, and he lost no time in following me.

'Thank you,' he said, as he came out; 'you have rendered me a signal service. But for you I should have perished with hunger beneath that stone.'

'How ever did you get there?'

'O, it's my home, and I, like a fool, allowed myself to be shut up in it. Three days ago a quantity of earth was drifted against my door in a violent shower. When I saw my danger it was already too late to escape. I was blocked in. I tried to get out, but it was of no use, for I am not able to burrow in the ground. I had lost all hope of ever again seeing the light of the sun, when your song struck upon my ear.'

I looked at the staphylinus as he spoke. He was of good height, of a dull bluish-black colour, strongly built, and armed with a pair of pretty formidable mandibles.

'You seem exhausted,' I observed.

'I am quite done up,' he replied, in a voice which betrayed his weakness. 'I should be very glad of something to eat.'

'What is your usual food?'

'Larvæ, worms, and that sort of thing. But I really think at this present moment I could manage anything.'

'Well, look under that strawberry-bush down there. I saw a slug there just now, which will be the very thing for you.'

He did not need twice telling, but ran to the spot I pointed out. Suddenly a great fear seized me, and I followed him till I saw him find the slug and bury his jaws in its back. I then re-

turned with my mind more at ease. My fear had been that he might perhaps meet our friend Firefly: in his famished condition he would have made but one mouthful of our poor comrade.

I went on with my singing.

Not knowing what to do with myself after an hour of this amusement, I went to see if the spider had had good sport. She was

motionless in the centre of her web, the absolute integrity of which proved that she was still waiting for her breakfast. This did not surprise me. The sun, now at the zenith of its course, was shining brilliantly in a cloudless sky; all Nature seemed asleep, and not so much as a midge was stirring anything. Now and then a wasp or a bee flew rapidly past,



but the rustling of their wings alone broke the universal silence.

'Ah, ah!' I thought to myself, 'it's not much breakfast you'll get, and your dinner won't be caught either in a hurry. However, you are blessed with both patience and craft. I wish you good luck.'

Reflecting thus I resumed my walk.

I followed the borders of the wood already referred to. Between it and the strawberry-bed which stretched away beneath me on the left was a neglected kind of paddock, in which grew tufts of heather, coarse grass, and a few furze-bushes. The soil was dry, barren, and sandy. The place seemed to be uninhabited, and except for half a dozen grass-

hoppers and a few ants not a living creature was to be seen. The grasshoppers were of the variety with gray bodies and blue under-wings. They came to me as soon as they saw me, and bade me welcome.

Grasshoppers, as of course you know, are our cousins-german, and we have always been on very good terms with them. There is a great family likeness between us. To be quite accurate, however, I must own that they are in some points our superiors; they have more elegance, more grace, an easier carriage, and more vivacity than we crickets. They cultivate music with enthusiasm, and consider themselves proficient in the art. I must observe,

though, that there is a great monotony about their style—a want of expression, which ends by becoming wearisome to susceptible ears. They have one particularly harsh shrill note, in which they indulge to excess. I hasten to add that this is merely my private opinion. I do not pretend to be expressing the general verdict. I am myself an artist, naturally disposed to think my own style preferable to any other, so that I am a little open to the charge of prejudice. I shall, I hope, be pardoned for this criticism on my big cousins, considering how frankly I have admitted their undeniable superiority in other respects.

‘Ah, it was you we heard just now,’ cried one of them. ‘You puzzled us very much. To what lucky chance are we indebted for the pleasure of seeing you in these parts?’

I related my adventures of the preceding days in a few words, and told them my reasons for exiling myself from my family. They listened with great apparent interest and sympathy.

I was just turning away, when I saw a kind of cricket of huge size advancing towards us.

‘Who is that enormous creature?’ I asked, astonished at the appearance of the new-comer.

‘It is a stranger,’ was the reply. ‘He dropped amongst us from the sky the other day. He says he comes from a long distance, and his talk is very strange; he tells such stories—’

‘I tell you nothing but what is true,’ haughtily replied the stranger, who had now approached near enough to hear my cousin’s last words.

‘Come, come, don’t be angry,’ observed one of the latter, laughing; ‘but own frankly that you only meant to hoax us yesterday with your extraordinary history.’

‘Not at all,’ answered the stranger quickly. ‘I have travelled hundreds of miles, swept along by a hurricane which carried me off from amongst my companions.’

‘You hear what he says?’ the cricket whispered to me; adding, in a louder voice, ‘And your travelling companions were very numerous, were they not?’

‘There were thousands of millions of us, and as we flew we formed a cloud several miles in length and breadth, darkening the light of the sun, and spreading terror in the countries over which we passed. Once a cannon was fired at us.’

Hearing the stranger seriously narrate such extraordinary things, I gave my cousins a look of surprised inquiry, and one of them, as he met my eyes, raised his foot to his forehead.

At this significant gesture, combined probably with the expression of my face, they burst with one accord into a roar of laughter and ran off in all directions, leaving me alone face to face with the giant.

I did not feel at all comfortable.

‘Insolent creatures!’ he thundered. ‘Ignorant fools, who have never seen anything but these tufts of heather beneath which they were born! They have nothing but incredulity and mockery for those who know more than themselves.’

‘Well,’ I observed, ‘it must be owned that what you have just told us is extraordinary and, pardon the word, just a little improbable.’

‘Is that any reason why it should not be true? I have merely stated a fact. What interest had I in making them believe it?’

‘None whatever, of course.’

‘You seem more sensible, cric-

ket; *you* do not take me for an impostor.'

'Of course not, of course not,' I answered hurriedly. 'But as for them, you must make excuses; they are but giddy things.'

I was not altogether at my ease, truth to tell, at finding myself alone with this creature, whose mind might really, for all I knew, be deranged. So after bowing to him as politely as I could, I took my leave.

In thinking over this meeting, I recollected having once heard of a family of grasshoppers known as migratory grasshoppers or locusts, who are in the habit of travelling from country to country in vast numbers. Perhaps the one I was leaving was a stray member of that race.

After ten minutes' walk I came to a place where a path from the wood cut across the uncultivated paddock and brought it to a sudden termination. On either side of this path was a steep bank on which nothing grew. The upper edge of the bank consisted of a network of old heather-roots, overhanging the path in such a manner that from the advanced point I had reached I commanded a view of a considerable extent. I stopped perforce. There was no need for me to go any further, and I was about to return as I had come when my attention was attracted by something which surprised me extremely, and held me rooted to the spot.



(*To be continued.*)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER V. THE LAKE OF WALENSTAD.

THOUGH the wondrous Walensee or Lake of Walenstad, towards which we are now wandering, has been celebrated in many and various tones, its praises have not yet been exhausted. There is, in fact, no song worthy of it; for how can the melody of a little spring ditty express what it requires a full-toned symphony to utter? The Walensee serves as a sort of introduction to prepare the traveller for what awaits him farther on, in the more sublime parts of the country. The lake lies on the threshold of the region of the Alps, and receives the waters of many a swift-flowing stream. The Seez flows into it on the east, close by the little town of Walenstad; on the west, near Wesen, it receives the Linth, and on the south the Murg,—all of which lead, if we will follow them, to the glorious Alps of Glarus and the lower part of St. Gall, to the snowy peaks of the Glärnisch, Clariden, Tödi, Hausstock, and Saurenstock, among whose glaciers they have their source.

We are now in the river-territory of the Rhine, and in the mountain-territory of the Tödi. The latter is monarch of the whole region, and a very splendid kingdom he has. Wishing to be an independent sovereign, he separated himself, just where the Oberalpstock rears itself on high, from the ancient monarch of monarchs, St. Gotthard, and drew away with him a numerous following of stately princes, such as the Wind-

gälle, Scheerhorn, Clariden, and Bifertenstock, and many others, whom he brought into the lake district, into the midst of the Lakes of Lucerne, Eger, Zürich, and Walen. Here he drew up his troops in order of battle, ranging them in three divisions. On the borders of Uri, Glarus, and Schwyz, looking towards the Muotta valley, he placed the range which have the Glärnisch for their chief and leader. The Schild, Mürtschenstock, and Mageren reared their heads between the Rieseten Pass and the Walensee, farther to the east; and the bold peaks of the Seven Churfürsten formed his vanguard in the north, where they joined the precipitous cliffs on the north side of the lake, and sent forth outposts to the east as far as the Rhine, and even beyond it.

The whole extent of country around the lake, from the chain of the Churfürsten down to the Tödi, is extremely beautiful and sublime. You may either wander along the southern shore of the lake, and revel in poetry as you listen to the rustling of the luxuriant foliage overhead, or, if you are an active mountaineer, you may penetrate into the Glarus Alps; while if you have come for the sake of the baths, you may take your fill of peaceful enjoyment at Stachelberg.

Glarus was originally a pastoral canton, and is now one of the busiest in Switzerland. Until the sixteenth century its population

lived altogether on the produce of their pastures, on what they earned by cow-keeping and cheese-making. One ancient product of its dairies is the green Glarus cheese, often called herb-cheese, which is well known throughout the whole civilised world, and is still despatched to all parts, being everywhere considered a great delicacy. It is peculiar to the canton of Glarus and its immediate neighbourhood, and owes its colour and smell to a strongly aromatic blue melilot which grows here, and here only. Indeed, scoffers say that you may smell the little canton farther than you can see it.

Those who wish to go up to Stachelberg had better choose the middle one of the three Glarus roads—that, namely, which leads up the Linth or Grossthal. There are two other valleys running parallel with it on the left and right—namely, the wonderful Kloenthal, with its lovely lake, on the east, and the slate-producing Sernfthal, or Kleinthal, on the right.

Quite in the background of the Grossthal, where it is shut in to the south by the broad stone blocks and glaciers of the Selbsanft, the Clariden, and the Tödi, lies the beautiful valley of Linththal, and opposite it, on a meadow covered with low shrubs and surrounded by pleasant little woods, nestles Stachelberg, close to the Braunwaldberg, and looking far and wide over the valley and mountains from its sunny eminence. The tourist will find waterfalls, meadows, brooks, chalets where he can get milk, villages nestling among trees, and lovely mountain-views, all in the immediate neighbourhood. Everybody goes down to Luchsing, a very favourite resort, or up to the Braunwald, whence the views are very extensive, and probably no visitor to the

baths has ever come away without revelling in the falls of the Diessbach, Fätschbach, and grand Leukelbach. But the tourist will naturally wander farther a-field, and, if he wishes to see a miniature Via Mala, he has nothing to do but to wander farther up the gradually contracting valley till he reaches the modern Pantenbrücke—a bridge flung across the gorge at the height of some two hundred feet above the raging river Linth. It is not far from here to the Uelalp and Sandalp, and when you have reached these you have a whole panorama of mountains and glaciers before you. The great plateau of Urnerboden must not be forgotten, and when there, those who have a mind to do so can descend into the Schächenthal, in the canton of Uri, which is so full of historical reminiscences. The excursion to the Kloenthal, with its lake, is, however, far pleasanter, and is, indeed, well worth making. The valley is shut in on the one side by the stern cliffs of the Glärnisch, as well as by the Ruchen, Milchblankenstock, Nebelkäpplez, Feuerberg, and Brenelsgärtli, and on the other by the Wiggis and his train. The cliffs rise immediately and precipitously out of the lake, which is fed by the numerous streams of snow-water which trickle from their hollows. The valley, with its alternations of meadow-land, copse-wood, rock, and water, is a perfect pastoral poem, and the monumental stone erected to the poet Gessner could not have been more happily placed in any other spot.

The people of Glarus have a great affection for the valley and lake, and on beautiful summer days many a pilgrimage is made to its wooded shores, and the cliffs reëcho with the sound of merry voices. We might make many



COSTUME IN THE CANTON OF GLARUS.

more excursions. Those who wish to go in a southerly direction may take their choice between three passes—the Sandalp-pass, Kisten-pass, and Panixer-pass, all of them rather difficult. They all three lie at the back of

the valleys of Glarus, and lead into the valley of the Vorder-Rhein. But there is another achievement greater than any of these—namely, the ascent of the Tödi, which those who sojourn at Stachelberg will no doubt consider as their crown-

ing feat. Many an eye has looked upon him with wonder and longing as the lord of the Glarus-Alps. The novice, gazing for the first time at the Alpine world from the Uetliberg in Zürich, is sure to have his attention immediately attracted by this magnificent mountain, which cannot fail to strike him both by its gigantic proportions and by its calm dignity. Its snowy crest is visible from the most distant mountains of Bavaria and Tyrol; and the whole of East Switzerland and the Northern Alps, from the Crispalt to the Calanda, look up

to the Tödi as their supreme and only monarch. The solid mighty mass rises broadly and majestically to a height of more than eleven thousand feet, having its buttresses firmly planted in the Russein-thal, in the glacier-valley of the Bifertenfirn, and in the trough of the Sandfirn. Numerous ice-clad peaks stand around it like so many attendant vassals; but the Tödi, the high and mighty sovereign of the Northern Alps, gleams far above them all, and is always the first to be crowned by the golden beams of the rising sun.

CHAPTER VI. THE LAKE OF ZÜRICH.

If the shores of the Walensee, as well as of many another little lake, are sacred to the dreams and meditations of the Muse of Poetry, the neighbourhood of the Lake of Zürich is surely the domain of the Muse of Science. Science has here been busily employed in investigating the secret of ancient times, and in deciphering the inscriptions which mighty Nature has left not only on blocks of stone at the bottom of seas or lakes, but on many another grand and imperishable monument. Nor has she been unsuccessful: the secret has been disclosed; one veil after another has been removed from the past; and we, who already knew a good deal about the old age of our ancient mother, may now read and wonder at the four great books which tell of her early life. These books are entitled respectively the 'Glacial Age,' 'Stone Age,' 'Bronze Age,' and 'Iron Age.'

Many of the principal scenes in these various acts of the great drama were played out in the

neighbourhood of the Lake of Zürich, in the district lying between it and the Glärnisch and Tödi, and extending to the Rhine or even beyond. A gigantic stream of ice issued in former days from the Alps of Upper Glarus, and advanced through the Linththal and Sernfthal up to the Walensee, where it joined the left arm of the Rhine-glacier, after which the two flowed slowly but steadily northwards together. There was not a mountain to stop their course, for the Uetliberg and Albis, though rising more than 2500 feet above the sea, lay buried deep beneath the enormous mass of ice. There was not a lake to be seen; for even the largest of them existed but in embryo, and they were all slumbering in bonds of iron. Patches of earth appeared island-like here and there, but the plants had all migrated, and so had the animals, except such as the marmot, mountain-hare, wild goat, and chamois, which are accustomed to glacial regions, and the reindeer, musk-ox, golden and arctic fox, and

ptarmigan, all of which belong to the extreme north, and can endure frost and cold without inconvenience. The latest discoveries have also proved beyond doubt the fact of man's existence during this reign of death. Traces of him have been found, meagre certainly, but clear enough, in the great album formed by the slate-coal of Wetzikon.

But what sort of life could he have lived, the poor thoughtless child of Nature, in the midst of darkness, privation, and perpetual conflict; here flying before the advance of the glaciers, and there following them step by step as they receded from the bottom of the valleys? This dismal period, however, came to an end at last, and light and warmth once more prevailed over the earth; the glaciers retreated from the plains, and crept farther and farther upwards to their last refuge among the High Alps.

Those were very ancient and remote times, when civilisation still lay enveloped in the shadowy mists which precede the dawn. And yet, in spite of the thousands of years which have elapsed since then, our scientific men know something about those ancient days, and have already filled many a volume with the information they have managed to collect upon the subject. Hoary relics belonging to that prehistoric period have been conjured up from their muddy beds at the bottom of the lake, and may now be seen standing in museums, to be wondered at by the highly cultivated of the nineteenth century. Just as the vine-dressers dwelling at the foot of Mount Vesuvius knew of the existence of Pompeii long before it was suspected by the scientific world, so the fishermen of the Swiss lakes were long ago acquainted with

the fact that there was a world buried beneath the waters. As their boats glided over the surface, and they looked down into the slumbering depths in search of their prey, they could see, among the weeds and rubbish at the bottom, rows of piles blackened with age, but arranged in regular order. Many a curse did these useless erections beneath the waters evoke when, as often happened, the fishing-nets got entangled in them; and many a net, too, brought up from the deep at different times gigantic stag-horns, strange-looking potsherds, and wonderful implements. The people looked at these things, shook their heads over them, and then threw them down in the sand on the shore; or sometimes the young people would ask their great-grandfather if he knew anything about the pile-work and other things, and would be told in answer that he could not remember anything about it.

But in the winter of 1853, it happened that the waters of the Lake of Zürich sank lower than they had ever been known to do before; and the people of Meilen, who had seized this opportunity of completing some buildings along the shore, made the discovery that here, too, there were numerous old sharpened stakes, as well as pottery and articles made of stone and bone. The news soon reached the ears of the scientific world, and much zeal was shown in exploring the bottom of this and the other lakes of Switzerland; and the result of these investigations was that much light was thrown upon the 'Pile-building Period,' as the German scientists have named it, an age which dates back more than five thousand years before the dawn of history, and had

until now been completely hidden from us.

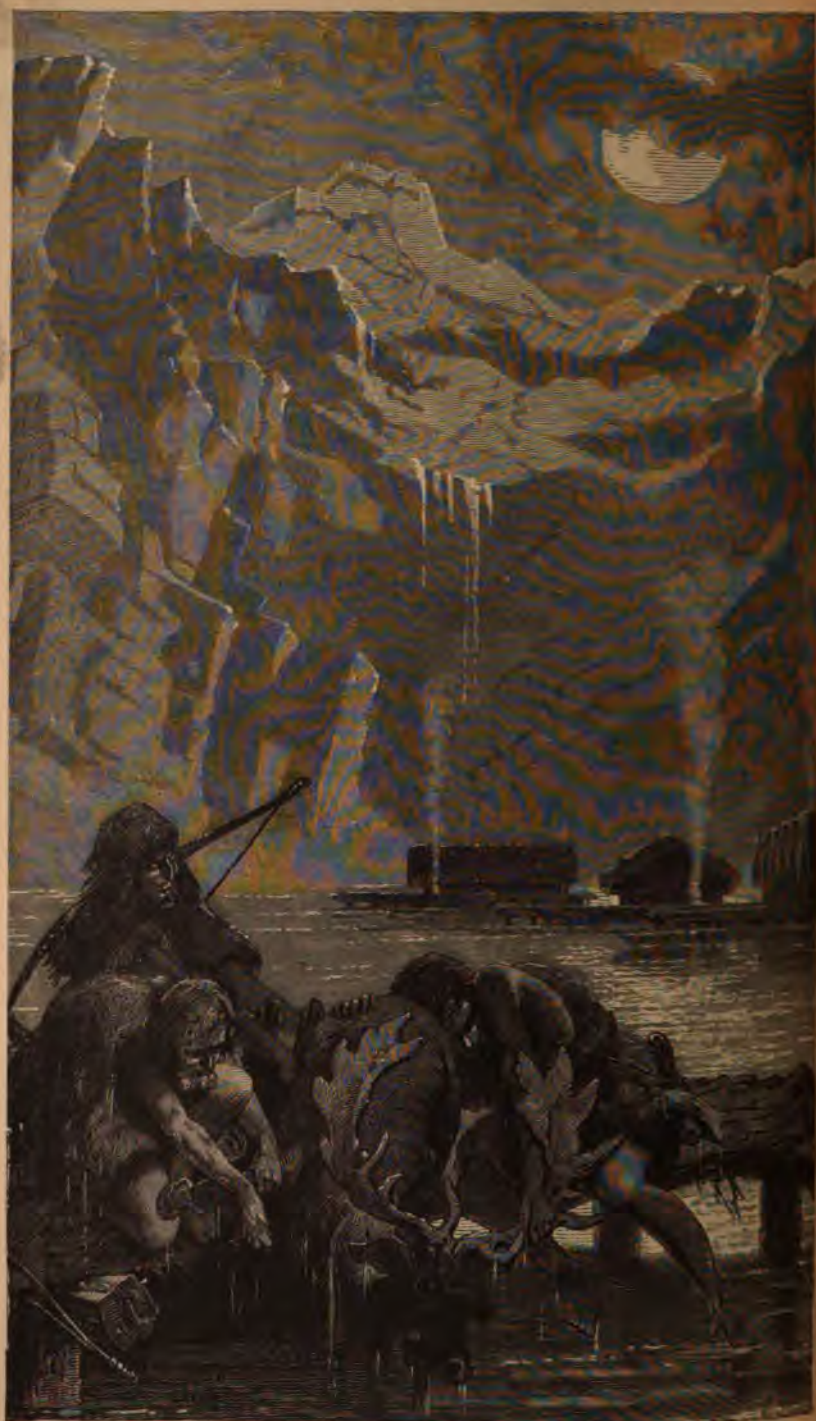
More and more discoveries were made. As soon as the dwellings of that time had been reconstructed — by no means an arduous task — the domestic utensils and hunting weapons, and the remains of plants and animals, all seemed to find their proper places. No doubt remained as to the manner of life led by these ancient people, and although we may have no positive assurance as to their name, we are able to divide the time of their existence into three well-defined ages, called respectively the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age, according to the materials of which their weapons and implements were successively made. The Stone Age of course was the earliest; the Bronze Age showed some advance in civilisation; and with the Iron Age we come to the times of the Romans. All the lakes have yielded more remains of the Stone Age than of either of the two others; but all three periods may be best studied at Neuchâtel.

By degrees, whole sets of such things as went to make up the furniture of a pile-dwelling were recovered, and are now to be seen displayed in the museums of various Swiss towns. There are stone hatchets and hammers, spears and darts, all made either of flint, serpentine, rock-crystal, chalcedony, or jasper, and sometimes even of rarer stones; there are implements made of bone, clubs of stag's-horn, daggers of bone, fish-hooks made of the claws and tusks of the wild boar, needles, primitive ornaments for the throat and hair, part of a spindle, even a bundle of flax, yarn for weaving, woven stuff, and netting of various kinds. To complete the picture, some ten different kinds of cereals have been found, various sorts of pulse, bits

of apple, cherries, and raspberries, all of which, having been turned into charcoal, are perfectly well preserved. Both the fauna and flora of the period have been accurately determined, and from the bones found in huge quantities around the piles it seems that the enemies and friends of man in those days were the bear, urus, bison, wild goat, fox, wolf, horse, pig, cat, pole-cat, domestic cattle, and many others besides.

But the men of those days must have had a hard battle for existence with the rough rude elements, the wild beasts, and the hostile tribes 'on the other side of the mountains.' It was probably their fear of the latter, together with the marshy state of the soil on the shore, which induced them to build their dwellings over the waters of the lake. There could not have been much enjoyment of life; there could have been no light-hearted laughter, no sound of singing, as the lake-dweller in his canoe glided over the waters for the purpose of fishing, or went to the shore either to take game or to pursue the wearisome labour of cutting down wood with his flint-axe. The thin walls of his wooden hut afforded him very slender protection against the frequent damp fogs arising from the icy glaciers and all the horrors of a long winter, in spite of his having built his dwelling close up against those of his neighbours, in spite of his having filled up the crevices with moss and clay, and in spite, too, of his having covered the roof with a thatching of pine-branches. There must have been a good deal of wind and plenty of thorough draughts, and, in fact, as says the poet: 'The ancient history of Europe must have begun with colds, tooth-ache, and swelled faces.'

To be sure, among the materials



A LACUSTRINE VILLAGE.

of the huts are to be found hearth-stones and traces of beds, but there were certainly no comforts, and man's only real gratification must have consisted in feasting, to which he doubtless applied himself with all his might and main. The remains of great heaps of bones, which appear to have been gnawed and then thrown into the lake, give us some insight into the nature of his banquets, and even the bill of fare provided.

People fancy they have discovered, even in the Stone Age, some slight tokens of the existence of commerce, carried on of course by means of barter; there is no doubt that it was practised in the later ages, and contributed greatly to the general advance of civilisation. As their weapons improved, people could venture, where the soil allowed it, to settle upon the shore; and if they still used the pile-buildings at all, it was as places of assembly, or for laying up their arms, implements, and winter stores, and suchlike purposes. Both the earlier and later pile-buildings were at last destroyed by fire; but where the fire did not wholly consume it carbonised, and it is to this circumstance that we owe the preservation of many a sub-aqueous museum of antiquities.

The old inscription might still stand over the gates of Zürich—

‘Nobile Turegum, multarum copia rerum;’

for she may still be regarded, and even more now than formerly, as ‘Noble Zürich, where many things are to be found in superabundance,’ and she may justly be called ‘a very jewel of fruitfulness.’

As to the inhabitants, a dry chronicler of the seventeenth century was moved to write of them in the following enthusiastic terms: ‘It is only just to extol the wonderful courtesy, kindness,

and civility of the people of Zürich—their liberality to the poor, their old-fashioned honesty and uprightness, their arts and manufactures, and their great success as well as assiduity in all matters of commerce.’ And what she was then that is she still—the chief source and the careful foster-mother of all the civilisation and prosperity of the neighbourhood. The town looks very beautiful as we come up the lake; but whether it be, as a modern English tourist has asserted, the pleasantest and most beautiful old town in our hemisphere next to Damascus, and whether it would be altogether gratified by being compared with the town which lies at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon, encircled by the many-armed Barada, is a question we must leave undecided. Comparisons are odious! To be sure, Damascus lies in the midst of a garden which is lovely to look upon, and sweet with the perfume of orange-flowers; moreover, it is called the first of the four earthly paradises, and viewed from the outside it certainly is most captivating. But within—there are the narrow, crooked, unpaved streets, the ownerless dogs, the dust, filth, laziness, and wretched spirit of *laissez-aller*, which go to make up the internal economy of all Oriental towns. In these particulars the comparison with Zürich would certainly not be at all flattering to the latter. True it is that in some of the old refractory parts in the heart of the town there are still several dark streets and alleys and damp shady nooks—streets where the sun never shines, and no shadows are cast even by the brightest of full moons; but the chief life of the place is concentrated upon the banks of the Limmat and the shore of the lake, and this is the Zürich which the

stranger sees and speedily learns to love. Unfortunately it does not receive much real attention from summer tourists; for after halting at Lake Constance to recruit their strength, and gazing southwards from the banks of the Rhine, either at Basle or Schaffhausen, no sooner do they reach Zürich and get their first glimpse of the only too seductive glaciers, than they feel impelled to hurry on into the land of the Alps. The ordinary visitor, who comes to Switzerland for Alpine flowers and herd-bells, for mountain-forests and snow and ice, will take no delight in modern town-life, with its rattling cabs, servants in red and blue liveries, bustling streets, and roaring factories. He has all that at home; and accordingly Zürich is generally treated as nothing better than the vestibule of Nature's great temple among the mountains; and though the tourist may gaze upon the lake from the charming garden or terrace of that most splendid of all hotels, the Hôtel Baur, though he may be in the midst of the most fashionable society, and though the water-nymphs may put on their most bewitching smiles, yet he soon gets weary of it all when once he has fallen under the spell of the lofty mountains.

Those who wish really to study such towns as Basle, Winterthur, Bern, and Zürich must come with other aims, and they must look at them with serious eyes if they wish to be pleased. But if they do come thus prepared, Zürich is sure to fascinate them more than all the rest, and they will be likely to indorse the verdict of Horner, the circumnavigator of the globe, who thus expressed himself: 'I have come back over and over again to my old opinion, that Europe is the

most beautiful quarter of the world, that Switzerland is the most favoured country in Europe, and that the pleasantest place in Switzerland for a man of cultivation to live in is, beyond all doubt, Zürich.'

Even those who bestow but a cursory glance upon it must see that the town is the very centre and focus of a province which has a great destiny before it. It lies in the midst of one of the grand amphitheatres in which the great battle of civilisation is being fought out; and the arena comprises both the extensive basin of the lake and its immediate shores. Behind these the rich fields and meadows slope gently upwards into green hills covered with vines, among which are scattered many pleasant dwellings. Behind the hills rise dark wooded heights, over which a torn jagged wall of mountain looks solemnly down, and the horizon is bounded by the white glaciers of the High Alps. In the midst of this grand landscape lies the proud and commanding town of Zürich, which has attracted to herself all the life of the surrounding hills and mountains, and is the source and centre of all the strength and prosperity of which so many tokens are visible around. Zürich is the Queen of the Land, the splendid Lake-Queen!

Each quarter of the town seems to have taken up one particular branch of industry, that on the left bank being chiefly devoted to manufactures, and that on the right to commerce; while for purposes of pleasant recreation we must seek the suburbs which fringe the lake, or slope upwards among the hills, where we shall find many a tasteful and even splendid villa, surrounded by its own well-kept gardens. In fact, the whole environs of Zürich are

one large park-like garden, which seem to invite one to make holiday and enjoy oneself in the most delightful, though maybe lazy, fashion. A native of Zürich climbs the Zürichberg with a certain feeling of pride; and as he sits beneath the shady trees on the raised terrace of the Höhe Promenade, he congratulates himself on belonging to the bright-looking town which lies below. Visitors will return again and again to gaze at the delightful view of the lake and distant Alps which is to be had from the grand Minster Bridge; or they will go to the neighbouring 'Bauschänzli,' a small island, formerly a bastion, where they may sit in the shade of some tall trees and enjoy the fresh breeze from the lake, while they look northwards at the town, and southwards across the water at the radiant landscape, which rises higher and higher in the horizon until it culminates in the snowy Alps.

On the right bank of the Limmat towers the venerable cathedral, called the Grossmünster, which dates from the eleventh century. It is a simple but noble structure, chiefly in the Byzantine style, though its two fine towers and much of the decoration were added at a later period. The statue on the west tower, representing an emperor with a crown on his head, is said to be intended for Charles the Great, who, as tradition says, conferred many benefits upon the town, and passed some happy days within its walls. Tradition has still many a pretty story to tell of those old times.

Opposite the Grossmünster stands its rival, the stately and splendid Frauenmünster, which is built in the form of a cross, and is of the thirteenth century. In front of it stands the old staple-house, where business went

on briskly enough in days gone by, until it was transferred to the large buildings near the railway-station. The edifice which is reflected in the waters opposite the staple-house is an old church, formerly called the Wasserkirche, or 'church by the water,' which is now used for scientific purposes. Within its walls are contained the Town Library, the Library of the Naturalists' Society, and the Museum of the Antiquarian Society. Looking up from the Wasserkirche is seen a row of hotels built in the most modern style, the grandest of them all being the Hôtel du Lac; and the background is formed by the four fine arches of the Minster Bridge.

The scene along the quay from the Wasserkirche to the Rathhaus is of the very liveliest description, and any one who wishes to count the heads of the two-and-twenty thousand citizens of the inner town cannot do better than take his stand here at certain particular seasons. The Rathhaus has retained very few marks of antiquity, and is, indeed, one of the more modern buildings. Its two predecessors served their generation from the twelfth to the end of the seventeenth century, and the days of the present edifice are surely numbered, for if Zürich continues to increase as it has done of late, it will certainly need a new and finer Rathhaus before long. Its development, which is now so manifest, was for a long time restrained by the iron girdle which encircled it in the form of solid ramparts, dating from mediæval times. But one day the town drew a deeper breath than usual, burst her bands, and from that moment throve as she had never done before, and developed into perfectly symmetrical beauty; the country had long been pushing its way impatiently up to the walls, and



A STREET IN ZÜRICH.

now the two began to melt one into the other. Only a few fragments of the bastions and ramparts were left standing here and there, and these are now chiefly used as spots of vantage-ground whence to survey the surrounding landscape. One of these, standing in the midst of the Botanical Garden, is called the 'Cats' Bastion,' and from it you may obtain a charming view of the new world which has grown up and is still growing along the lake. The 'Cat' is so beautifully situated in the midst of such pleasant green trees and shrubs, that it might well be our favourite spot but for the attractions of the Höhe Promenade and the Uto. The Uto, or Uetliberg, is the northernmost summit of the Albis range of hills; it is also the one which lies nearest Zürich, and commands a perfect panorama. The Albis ridge, which is really an accumulation of rubbish overspread by limestone breccia, rises gradually in the valley of Baar to the south, and then stretches along the western shore of the lake as far as Urdorf, in a line parallel with the river Sihl and the railway, a distance of more than twelve miles. It takes various strange forms in its course, being sometimes crested, sometimes flat, often perfectly bare, at one while destitute of water, and at another thickly wooded. Its chief summits are the Bürglenstutz, Hochwacht, Fallätsche, and Uetliberg.

People used to ascend the Uetliberg on foot and on horseback in somewhat ceremonious fashion; but now, like other Swiss mountains, it has fallen a victim to the railway, and the people of Zürich have one pleasure the more placed within their reach. For now, on fine Sundays, they can go in large family parties, with their wives and children,

to the summit of the chief eminence in the canton of Zürich, where they may refresh the inner man at the various excellent inns which have taken the place of the old robber-castles of Boldern, Schnabelburg, Hütliberg, and Manegg, and may then join their neighbours or the crowd of tourists in gazing at the town and the lake, and the mountains far and near, large and small, and may try to identify all they see by reference to Keller's capital guide. What a view it is for the eye to wander over! The panoramic view mentions the names of five hundred grand mountains and chains of mountains, from the jagged Säntis, which stands out so boldly conspicuous on the left, to the Bernese Alps, the Alps of Glarus, and the Jungfrau, who just shows her head far away to the right, and the Faulhorn, which is well-nigh hidden in mist. People who give themselves the trouble to make out and identify every peak may certainly flatter themselves that they have accomplished a hard day's work when evening comes; but those who have gazed upon the scene in the silvery light of a clear autumn day, or in the purple splendour of a bright summer evening, will have laid up one magnificent picture the more in the storehouse of their memories. Certainly the Uetliberg is the crown of the rural district of Zürich, but the various places about the lake are so many pearls in the diadem. Küssnacht, Thalwyl, Horgen, Meilen, Wädenswyl, Richterswyl, Stäfa, and many others, are built either close down to the water's edge or upon the hills along the shore, and they all look bright, clean, inviting, and hospitable. They all have their histories, but as we go towards Rapperschwyl, our thoughts are more likely to

revert with quiet sadness to the pleasant little island which rises from out the lake opposite the Castle of Pfäffikon; its name is Ufnau, and it contains the tomb of Ulrich Hutten, the best and most thoroughly German of all the men who lived at the time of the Reformation. The landscape is bathed in cheerful light, the waves flash upon the green fertile shore, and the charming little island is crowned with glorious sunshine.

Blessings upon the poor persecuted child of earth who here found rest, the man of large heart and bold speech, the knight both of sword and of pen! Let all those who rejoice in the national regeneration of Germany bestow a solemn blessing upon the shade of Ulrich Hutten, for this was what he laboured to accomplish. His bold work, entitled *Jacta alea esto* ('Let the die be cast'), aimed at emancipating the people from all and every kind of bondage; and Hutten towers a whole head and shoulders above even his most distinguished contemporary and fellow-combatant Luther, whose battles were all fought in the cause of religion only. But Fortune favoured the little monk, whereas the knightly Hutten continued poor and lonely, and received no favour from any but the Muses—all others forsook him. Prince and people betrayed him; his friends, even the best of them, disowned him; and he wandered, sick and ill, from door to door, finding none who would take him in, until at length he laid himself down to die in this little island in the Lake of Zürich.

Those were the times when a Luther was making the pillars of the Church in Germany to tremble, and when another Ulrich, surnamed Zwingli, who was born in the neighbouring town of Zürich, was hurling a lighted flaming

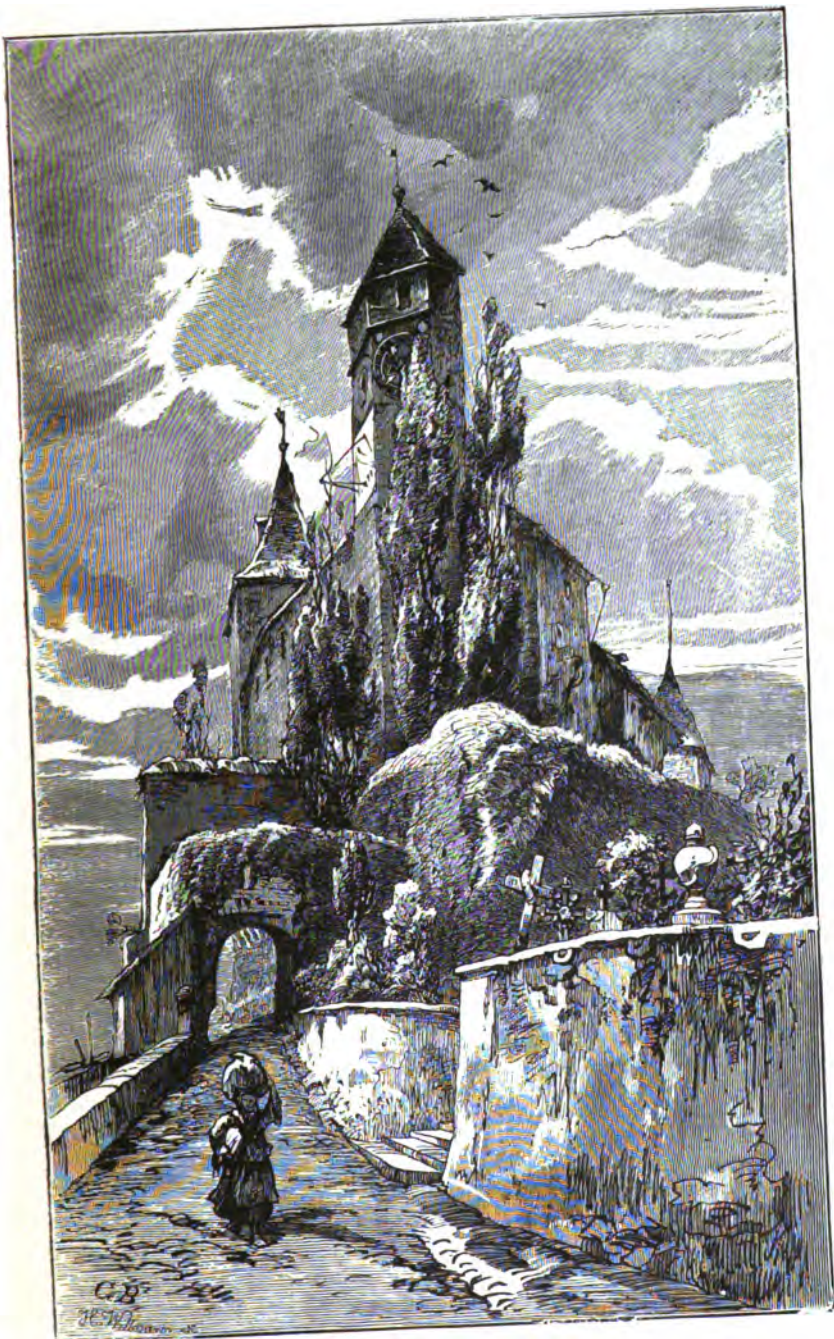
firebrand into the midst of the world.

Events followed their natural course, and the world's history moved on across the dead bodies on its way to liberty. But the spirits of Hutten and Zwingli still linger about Zürich; both were heroic men, for Zwingli died in the field with the banner of Zürich in his hand, and the people still follow his invisible flag in thronging crowds.

On reaching the gay harbour of Rapperschwyl the steamer comes to a halt, and the Untersee, or Lower Lake, terminates. On the other side of the long bridge is the Obersee, or Upper Lake, which extends from the ancient town and castle of Rapert to Schmerikon, and has no right to call itself by the name of 'Zürich,' inasmuch as it is bordered by two other cantons, St. Gall in the north and Schwyz in the south.

Two tongues of land jut out here from opposite sides of the lake; and from Rapperschwyl, which stands on the northern shore, the bridge extends completely across the lake into the district of Schwyz. Rapperschwyl, the 'town of roses,' so called not from the fragrant flower of our gardens, but from the stone roses in its coat-of-arms, is a picturesque little old town, built on terraces along the shore, and overshadowed by the old castle of Grafenburg, which stands upon an airy eminence, and once belonged to Rapert the Crusader. Both town and castle have often been hard beleaguered, and shortly before the massacre of Zürich the castle was stormed and burnt.

It is not often that one sees two places so close together which have so exactly kept pace with one another, both in their enterprise and in their civil progress, as the twin-towns of Zürich and Winterthur.



CASTLE OF RAPPERSCHWYL.

As regards the labours of the mind, one is the large brain and the other the small one; in labours of the hands, one is the left hand and the other the right, and the same flag waves from the walls of both. Winterthur is fair to look upon, as well as wealthy, and with these two advantages combined it is not difficult to make some noise in the world. But in spite of the antiquity of her family-tree, the modest little town on the Eulach does not care to be talked about; she lies amid sloping vineyards, pleasantly wooded hills, and the most luxuriant fields and meadows; is thoroughly contented and comfortable too, in a simple way, and enjoys a very happy life. She adorns herself merely for her own pleasure, for she has not many summer visitors; she builds pretty country-houses, lays out tasteful pleasure-grounds, and makes shady walks; and whatever the fathers of the town take in hand, from the building of a fine town-hall to the founding of the bells for the grand church, is all done for the honour of Winterthur. Industry flourishes here as in Zürich, as we may see by a glance at the immense manufactories. Industry has made Winterthur rich and fair, and a joyous spirit of industry seems to pervade the whole town, and to have a pleasantly refreshing effect even upon the passing guest.

The history of Winterthur goes back a very long way, at least as far as that of Zürich, and it is written upon the same pages. There was a Keltic town of Vitudurum before the time of the Romans, who afterwards took possession of and fortified it; and though the Roman Vitudurum may have stood rather on the site of what is now Ober-Winterthur, where many ancient remains are still being constantly discovered

both in the churchyard and in the vineyards of Lömperg, still the modern town is a direct descendant of the old one. The Castle of Vitudurum covered the road leading from Rætia to the district of the Alemanni, and a Roman military road led from it to Vindonissa. This road crossed the river Töss by means of a bridge, ascended the Steig, where remains of old pavement are still to be found, and then went on up to Nürensdorf and Baserdorf, whence it descended to Kloten, and so passed on to Vindonissa, which is the modern Windisch, a small place lying between Brugg and Baden, in the interesting canton of Aargau. Thither we are now about to bend our steps; but before doing so, we must pay a visit of ceremony to the splendid old fortress of Kyburg. Most towns in Switzerland, whether large or small, have an old castle attached to them, reminding one of the mediæval seals in brown cases which hang from old parchment documents and deeds of gift. Winterthur has Kyburg and the Castle of Wülflingen; Windisch, or rather Brugg, has no less than the old ancestral Castle of Habsburg; and Laufenburg on the Rhine has the sister-castle, also called Habsburg. The thread which once united the seal to the parchment was severed by the sword of the burghers; and since the severance the towns have continued to flourish, while most of the castles have fallen into decay, and if not altogether overgrown by weeds and grass, are now little more than picturesque ruins. Even the ruins, however, bear witness to the ascendancy and wild feuds of the old Empire, which stretched out her hands far across the Rhine and into the very heart of Helvetia. How often have the walls of these old



CASTLE OF WILDENSTEIN.

castles reëchoed with the party-cries of 'Welf' and 'Waiblingen!' The ruins of the Castle of Alt-Wülflingen, which crown one of the hills on the left bank of the Töss, near the beautiful baronial Castle of Wülflingen, have something to say on this subject; for here the Emperor Henry III. kept his insolent and seditious uncle, the Bishop of Regensburg, closely confined, nor would he release him, in spite of the fulminations of the Pope. Until the fifteenth century it was inhabited by Barons and Counts von Wülflingen; but after that it often changed hands. One of the strangest of its many owners was the presumably mad General Salomon Hirzel, who spent immense sums in finishing and fitting up the interior of the castle, and lived here with his sons in a wild fantastic fashion, until he had squandered his last farthing.

Of all the old castles, that of Kyburg is the best preserved. The rustic old building, with its six towers, still defies all weathers, and presents an appearance so imposing as to command respect even from the nineteenth century. It rises above the wood like a dream of the Middle Ages, or the very embodiment of romance; and the tiny village in front, with its quiet little church, the well-tilled fields on the open sunny hill-side, the tall old lime-trees standing before the ancient gateway, with its coat-of-arms, which leads into the grand courtyard of the castle, all help to complete the strange picture. To make it quite perfect, it needs only that Rudolf of Habsburg should ride forth across the bridge, followed by a train of mounted attendants, with falcons on their wrists and dogs barking at their sides, all on their way to enjoy a day's sport in the forest. But there is hardly a sound to be

heard, and the deep silence is broken only by the hum of the bees in the lime-trees, the tapping of the woodpecker, or the scream of the jay. The castle is spending its old age in profound peace; and, if it be ever disturbed, it is by nothing worse than the bright laughter of young maidens, who come up the beautiful quiet path-way through the wood with the visitors in the summer-time. In their presence the hoary shadows of the past creep back into the twilight of the 'Roman tower,' or into the solemn darkness which enshrouds the chapel of the castle, which is built in the Romanesque style, and was frequented by pious worshippers as early as the eleventh century. The place was formerly inhabited by some of the mighty ones of the earth, an ancient race, whose family-tree had begun to send forth branches as early as the ninth century. They were the Counts of Kyburg, and owned all the land between Kaiserstuhl and Lake Constance; but still, great as they were, it is not to them that the castle owes its historical renown. In 1264, the last Count, Hartmann der Aeltere, died, leaving the place to his nephew, the son of his sister Hedwig, who had married Albrecht von Habsburg; and this nephew, then a dashing young fellow, was afterwards known to the world as the Emperor Rudolf. The beautiful Castle of Kyburg was always a favourite resort of his, and its walls have frequently sheltered not only himself and many of his family, but also the crown jewels of the empire; so its history has been long and varied, and can nowhere be studied to such advantage as here, where we may take note at our leisure of the various additions made to it in the course of centuries. The present owner has handled it



CASTLE OF KYBURG.

reverently, and has shown considerable taste in his pious efforts to preserve it from decay. In this respect Kyburg has been more fortunate than the sister-castle in the district of Aargau, on the other side of the Limmat and Reuss, of which, though it is properly speaking the true cradle of the house of Habsburg, nothing now remains but a few venerable fragments. Here the haughty race, whose descendants now reign in the grand Kaiserburg of Vienna, grew up in the modest-looking castle which crowned the pine-clad height of Wülpelsberg or Wilibaldsberg. The only remaining tower is in ruins and overgrown with ivy, and the dilapidated rooms once occupied by the father of emperors are now the dwelling of a fireman. The solemn old walls seem to look down upon modern times as if they were ghosts of the Middle Ages. Close at their feet the locomotive engine rushes by, and the broad high-road is alive with all the bustle of the nineteenth century. There, too, at the foot of the Wülpelsberg, lie the baths of Schinznach, where gaily-dressed fashionable visitors promenade up and down the well-kept walks among shady trees and blooming flowers, or saunter along the avenue of plane-trees by the side of the river Aar, or make excursions to the beautiful castles of Wildegg and Wildenstein, the property of Herr von Effinger, from the grounds of which there is an exquisite view of the Alps and the Valley of the Aar. Indeed, the Castle of Habsburg is planted in the midst of a truly lovely landscape, and from the tall square old keep the view is most picturesque. The scene is the same as that upon which Count Rudolf gazed in his young days, before he wore the imperial crown—there is the site of the

Roman settlement and fortress of Vindonissa, of which there is scarcely a trace now to be discovered above ground; then there is Birrfeld, where Cæsar broke the power of the Helvetii; Neu-hof, where the noble Pestalozzi once laboured; and Birr, where his body was laid to rest when his arduous weary course was run; and farther off, crowning the whole, shine the Alps in solemn grandeur. There is an interesting tradition as to the origin of Habsburg, which is sufficiently significant of the bold spirit of the family who owned it. Bishop Werner of Strasburg, being in want of a safe stronghold, asked his brother, the merry Count Radbot von Altenburg, to build him one on the Wülpelsberg. Radbot had considerable sums of money sent him for the purpose, but he spent a very small proportion on the walls and stones, and the castle grew up a very modest structure. There were no fortifications or defences such as the bishop had specially desired; and when he came to view the work which had cost him so dear he was highly indignant. His brother, however, told him to make himself easy and to have patience until the following morning, for that he would raise walls in the course of the night which should be capable of defying the most formidable foe. And lo, when the sun arose next morning, his golden beams were reflected in a wall of steel, formed by hundreds of armed vassals whom the count had brought up and stationed around the castle. This was in the year 1020. The castle was called 'Havesburg,' and from it the Altenburgs afterwards took the name of 'Habsburg.'

The old towers and ruins in this neighbourhood could indeed tell us of many suchlike deeds of



STREET IN AARAU.

blood, but happily their voices are drowned by other and pleasanter sounds; and as we listen to the cheerful hum of industry around, and note the rich beauty of the green fields and blooming orchards which abundantly repay the labour bestowed upon them by the industrious peasant, we feel that the canton of Aargau, or Argovie, well deserves to be called 'The Canton of Culture.' Fortune has greatly favoured it, as we may see by a glance at its pleasant little capital of Aarau; and though poetry may have been driven away by the introduction of chain-bridges, new town-halls, barracks, school-buildings, and museums of natural history, and though all

that was picturesque may have vanished before the presence of cotton and silk factories, still Aarau's prose is worthy of high esteem, since it has contributed to the formation of such a man as Zschokke, the well-known historian and novelist.

Meantime we have been wandering farther and farther away from the Lake of Zürich, and now a short excursion from Aarau to Schinznach or Brugg will take us to the small town and castle of Laufenburg, where we may sit in the pleasant little inn, Zum Bären, near the market-gate, and gaze upon the blue-green waters of the Rhine, or the shady woods by which the town is surrounded.

(To be continued.)

LONDON BIRDS.

We have sung for long in the low-wall'd garden,
 We have flitted among the ivy-leaves;
 And O, we know that some hearts will pardon
 The tiny sins of such tuneful thieves.
 We have flown and hopp'd, to settle and flutter
 Near some poor toiler's dull window-pane;
 How happy we were when we heard her utter
 A gentler speech for our song in the rain!

We have seen some London sights: one neighbour
 Tending a lonelier, poorer waif,
 Sharing the fruits of hard toil and labour
 To lessen her grief, to keep her safe;
 An old man led by a tender daughter,
 To feel the kiss of the April sun;
 A little child lifting a jug of water
 To help the sick woman, whose work was done.

We flew in the murky air, near an attic:
 A life struggled up for praise and fame,
 While the sunset wrote in one hue emphatic
 Praise and love of the one great name.

To the wistful eyes came a purer glory,
The poet forgot his efforts to rise
In reading the beautiful endless story
Written by God in the evening skies.

What though the bars of that window were narrow ?
There was space for us—from the sunset we stole,
From the purple and gold—a little brown sparrow
May soothe and comfort a human soul.
We paused in the splendour of light, a picture,
A sweet little picture, to charm his thought,
To make him forget the blame and stricture
The busy world to his attic brought.

And now, when the sun has set, the glitter
Of day has faded, we muse in our nest
Of that busy world's tangle—its sweet and bitter,
The tears and laughter that settle to rest.
We pray in our little way to heaven,
As we hush to sleep in the clearer breeze ;
And we know that our trespass on fruit is forgiven,
As we rock on the topmost bough of the trees.

Rest and labour, rest and labour ;
We dream of the shining arbutus berry ;
Rest and labour, love of our neighbour,
Children's voices to keep us merry.
We dream of the crumbs strewn by kindly fingers,
Of peaceful deeds, of merciful words ;
Lastly, the dream of His bounty lingers,
Who loves and cares for the city birds.

E. M. HARRIS.

CAUGHT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

On the 8th of August 18—, I left Barbadoes by the mail-boat which was bound for St. Thomas; on the 9th we were close to St. Lucia, when an important part of the machinery broke, thereby stopping our further progress. Our signals of distress were observed by a steamer then going to St. Lucia, which took us in tow. It was the *Edward* of Liverpool, come to fetch sugar, and afterwards to touch at St. Thomas, by way of Dominica. This circumstance seemed almost providential. Our ship being unable to proceed on her way, we should have had to wait ten days for the next packet. By getting on board the *Edward*, I might reach St. Thomas in time to take the mail-boat for Europe. I could not hesitate to profit by the opportunity.

On the evening of the 11th, the *Edward* left St. Lucia. We were seventeen passengers on board, amongst whom were an American merchant, Mr. Thornhill, with his wife and a couple of nice little boys; a Spaniard, Señor Nuñez, with his two daughters, Pedrita and Manuela, charming brunettes (especially the elder), nineteen and seventeen years of age, and to whom a couple of brothers of the same nationality, José and Phelipe Rivero, residing at Porto Rico, seemed to me to pay needlessly assiduous attention. Besides these there were others with whom I scarcely became

acquainted. Nevertheless, one could not help remarking the mixed parentage of two Creole friends, in spite of the pains they took to disguise it. I was the only person belonging to government service, my colleagues having preferred to remain at St. Lucia, and there await some more comfortable means of transport. I should have been wise to do as they did.

The *Edward* was not one of those floating towns in which the passengers hardly know each other by sight. It was therefore a perfectly natural consequence that, after making acquaintance at dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Thornhill, the Spaniards, and myself met in the saloon with the freedom from formalities enjoyed only by travellers. We had music; the two sisters sang, and that exceedingly well, particularly Pedrita, whose sympathetic voice was inspired by an expression which could only arise from nascent, even though perhaps unconscious, love. And there is such a thing, I thought, as love at first sight. But love for whom? Ay, there was the rub. Both girls were remarkable for the unaffected grace which renders Spanish ladies so seductive. In the elder sister this native charm was enhanced by the intelligence which beamed from her bright black eyes, as well as by the clever repartees which fell so naturally from her ruby lips. At least, I thought her clever and intelligent; about her beauty there could be no doubt—

none whatever on my part, and still less, if possible, on the part of José Rivero, who struck me from the first as forward and disagreeable. But long before the evening was over I discovered that between the other two, Manuela and Phelipe, there was evidently a mutual and tender understanding; which, however, was no business of mine, as her father seemed to consider it a matter of course. It was scarcely possible to doubt they were engaged, and that with the old gentleman's full approval.

Next morning we coasted Martinique in the direction of Le Roseau. I had been unable to sleep in consequence of the stifling heat. Perhaps also intrusive fancies, which I could not drive out of my head because Pedrita was mixed up with them, might have kept me awake. Consequently, at the first peep of dawn, I was on deck. A slight mist veiled the sky, across which small clouds were rapidly sailing, at the same time emitting flashes of lightning, noiseless, but incessant. Wild gusts of wind swept from all points of the compass, subsiding into a lull the moment afterwards. The sun rose pale and copper-coloured.

A five years' residence in the West Indies had given me a sufficient experience of hurricanes to be able to guess what was coming. We were threatened with one of those formidable phenomena. My fears being confirmed by the oscillations of the barometer, I did not hesitate to communicate them to the captain, urging him to turn back, and run for shelter in the roads of Fort de France. The captain, however, though an energetic fellow and a good sailor, had but a slight acquaintance with the navigation of the Antilles, combined with

considerable obstinacy. He replied with a jolly Jack-tar's supreme disdain when a landsman meddles with his affairs, 'I know my business without your teaching.' To reason with such pig-headedness was useless, especially as we were approaching Le Roseau (Dominica), where I expected he would be convinced by a voice more authoritative than mine.

Meanwhile my fellow-passengers had risen, and were calmly gazing at the peaks and valleys which indent the whole south coast of Dominica, stretching down to the sea in dark-green slopes, except when broken up here and there by bright-green patches of sugar-canes.

What I foresaw happened. At half-past nine we were about to drop anchor at Le Roseau, when a boat from the port came to order us to make for the offing, as a hurricane seemed imminent. Dominica in fact has not the slightest shelter to offer. A decision had to be taken at once; either to return to Martinique, or to make an effort to reach La Pointe-à-Pitre. The captain chose the second and assuredly the worse alternative, because it gave him the resource, in case of need, of putting into port at Les Saintes, only sixteen miles from the north point of Dominica and thirty-five from Le Roseau. In eight hours we might reach Pointe-à-Pitre, but there was not a single moment to be lost.

We therefore once more skirted the coast of Dominica. The stillness of the air was suffocating. From time to time a puff of wind, coming from the heights, swept noisily down the ravines, but had not the strength to get as far as us. The swell from the north came heavier and heavier, causing our speed to slacken considerably, as our engine was far from powerful. Scarcely had we reached the

channel which separates Dominica from Les Saintes, when the wind rose from the N.N.E.—gusty, but gradually freshening, and raising a sea which made the vessel roll terribly. It was as much as we could do to make headway with the wind constantly in the same direction, and continually increasing in strength. At five in the afternoon we were already under shelter of the last rocks of Les Saintes; but, in spite of all our engineer's efforts, we made no way, and were uncertain whether we could reach our anchorage, or whether we should not be obliged to run out to sea and brave the tempest there. The captain, no longer despising the advice of an obscure civilian, asked me what was best to be done. I advised him to persevere. Between the gusts we might manage to get forward a little, and reach the anchorage of the *Fond du Curé*, which was then only a few cables' lengths off. At worst we could cast anchor where we were. The rain soon added to our difficulties by hiding the land completely from view. A violent squall twisted the vessel athwart the wind, and then the hurricane broke loose. We could only anchor where we were, with fifteen fathoms of water. We cast our two bower-anchors, with the whole of their bowline and chain, besides a small anchor and cable—the sum-total of our resources. The ship swung round with her head to the wind, while the engine supported her in front against the violence of the gale and the seas.

We could not, literally, tell where we were. Blinded by the rain, deafened by the wind, we could neither see nor hear the neighbour at our side. Only by the glare of vast sheet-lightning, instantly followed by cracking thunder, could we distinguish the

outline of the land on our starboard. Nightfall increased the horror of our situation.

At nine the wind shifted to the north, still increasing in violence; the squalls roared like a discharge of artillery; the sails, although close-reefed to the yards, were torn away in shreds and tatters; and then the funnel of the steam-engine fell on deck with a crash which made us think our last hour was come.

The captain begged me to go and reassure the passengers, as he was unable to do so himself. In the saloon I found the poor Spanish girls weeping as if their hearts would break, in spite of their father's exhortations, and such comfort as their young compatriots could administer under the circumstances. Mrs. Thornhill was praying beside her children's bed. They were still fast asleep, unconscious of danger. Her deadly paleness increased with every gust of wind, and her lips paused to listen to the storm in the utterance of her half-finished prayer. Her husband, seated by her side, with clenched teeth, closed fists, and half-open mouth, seemed preparing to fight some invisible enemy. He gazed on his wife in silence, while big drops of perspiration trickled slowly down his cheeks. The other passengers were scattered here and there; some made attempts to start a broken conversation, which found no echo. The two Creoles took to drinking to keep up their spirits.

I felt for the poor ladies, and tried to encourage them; but my words were so completely at variance with my thoughts that I could not persuade them into a conviction which I did not entertain myself. In fact, it was evident to me, from the slowness of the change in the wind's direction, that the centre of the hurricane

would pass very close to us. We must therefore expect to experience a further increase of the tempest's violence, and it seemed scarcely probable that our ship could weather it.

To escape from these painful scenes I mounted on deck. It was ten o'clock. The captain shouted in my ear that the barometer was down to 742 millimètres, that the engine had stopped working, and that we should soon be on the coast. He described our situation only too correctly. A few moments afterwards the wind suddenly veered to N.N.W., giving the ship a shock so violent as to break one of the chain-cables. The masts were cut down—a useless sacrifice; for the second chain broke, and we were dragging on our small anchor, which, however, sustained us a little, and saved us from absolutely running before the gale.

The captain had the alarm-gun fired; but as we ourselves could hardly hear the report in the midst of the howling of the tempest, there was little chance of its being noticed at a distance. What help, moreover, could we expect in such weather? Soon the noise of breakers on the rocks was audible. The destruction of the ship was merely an affair of minutes.

A heavy sea breaking over the stern threw everybody off their legs; the ship, reeling round with her broadside to the wind, received blow after blow and capsized, falling on her side to seawards. At the same time a wave, sweeping over the ship, tore away part of the hatches which had saved the saloon from being flooded.

I rushed down-stairs. The despair I beheld there is indescribable. The sisters, hopelessly wring-

ing their hands, uttered inarticulate cries for help; Mrs. Thornhill, exhausted and strengthless, lay on the carpet, leaning against the table, with her younger boy in her arms; her husband, close by, took charge of the elder, who increased their anguish by incessantly wailing, 'Papa, dear papa, O, do take care of me! don't let me be drowned!' While the poor father mechanically and untruthfully answered, 'Don't cry, my child; there is no fear of that. The storm will very soon be over.' It was a painful dialogue to listen to. The other passengers seemed to have lost their senses. The hoarse cries of the Creoles, now completely drunk, increased the horrors of the situation.

The captain gave orders for the passengers to come upon deck, because remaining below exposed them to the risk of drowning. But on deck there was danger of another kind—namely, the chance of being swept away by the waves breaking over the ship. I undertook to bring Mrs. Thornhill up. She followed me without making the least resistance; in fact, she was scarcely conscious of what she was doing. She was then lashed to a capstan near the stern; her elder son was fastened close to her. Mr. Thornhill, who had brought up the youngest wrapped in a blanket, had recovered his energy, together with the hope of saving those so dear to him. He took up his position close by, begging me to join him in watching over their safety. I promised to do so; but went, nevertheless, to assist the brothers Rivero, who could scarcely induce their fair companions to mount, so violent and unreasoning was the terror with which the hurricane oppressed them. In the end we succeeded in placing them against a portion of the deck-house which

had hitherto resisted the force of the storm.

Some ropes had been stretched for the passengers and crew to hold on by and resist the force of the seas which broke one after the other, covering us with a mixture of sand and water. The ship, nevertheless, being completely water-logged, felt the repeated shocks less violently. All we could do was to pray that her carcass and framework might hold together, in which case we might escape.

All at once the vessel upheaved, and then fell immediately afterwards. We disappeared beneath an enormous wave. I said to myself, 'It is all over with us,' and instinctively clung to the little Thornhill who had been confided to my charge. But the wave retreated; the ship had resisted, and we were still alive. I was surrounded by the same persons as before, only I felt a sharp pain in my head. I had received a blow, from what I knew not. At the same moment I heard a piercing cry. It proceeded from the wretched Señor Nuñez, on missing one of his daughters from his side. Pedrita had been swept overboard. He was going to throw himself into the sea after her, and we had difficulty in preventing that act of despair. But what he did not do another, more capable of rendering assistance, had already done. José, after clasping for an instant the hand of his brother, who had neither strength nor courage to detain him, leapt over the netting that stood in the stead of bulwark, doubtless in the hope of saving her, however slight the possibility might be. I was jealous—would you believe it?—of his noble self-sacrifice. Why had I not practised the same devotion myself? True I was occupied, as well as

deeply interested, by my helpless young charge; but the two interests were far from the same either in kind or intensity.

This incident scarcely attracted notice. What signify the misfortunes of others when we are at our last hour ourselves? Their lot may soon be ours; and it was with the energy and rage of despair that every one clung tightly to the frail plank of safety which might shortly be engulfed together with them. At that moment there flashed before me like a transitory vision all the scenes of my early life, my home, and my parents awaiting the son whom they were never more to behold. Then came the image of Pedrita, pale, dead, bruised against the rocks. Poor dear Pedrita! I now felt that she was really dear to me. It was a bitter moment; happily a fleeting one. I was exhausted; my head throbbed with sharp darting pain; my clenched hands had scarcely strength to cling to their support; I still did my best to watch over the Thornhills. The mother and her elder son no longer gave signs of life; the wretched father dared not ask himself whether the something which he clasped to his breast was dead or alive.

Suddenly there fell upon us a calm—unexpected, stupefying. Through a rent in a cloud a star peeped out. Intense lightnings still flashed along the horizon, but with no sound of thunder. We experienced a singular impression, painful rather than agreeable; we seemed to be awakening from a frightful nightmare, escaping from a horrible pandemonium, the offspring of delirium or diseased imagination. The only audible sounds were the waves dashing against the sides of the ship or breaking on the shore. Neither his daughter's caresses nor Phe-

life's exhortations could repress the poor bereaved Spaniard's sobs. One would have said that he cared nothing for Manuela, but that his whole affection was concentrated on the daughter he had lost. It is surely, however, a pardonable weakness when we adorn with every virtue those who have been snatched from us by an early death.

Meanwhile hope returned; the sea raged less violently; the glare of the lightning showed us that a providential chance had cast us on a sandy beach, at only a few fathoms' distance from rocks on which the ship would have immediately gone to pieces. We also fancied we could distinguish the hurried movements of people on shore. Doubtless it was help come to our assistance.

The captain was perfectly aware that this sudden calm would prove of but short duration. An hour's respite was the most we could expect. Towards the north the sky cleared up a little; but to westward black-red clouds were rolling in vast eddies, torn every instant by vivid lightning. There was not a moment to be lost, and the captain was asking who would volunteer to swim on shore with a rope, to open a communication, when the booming of a gun was heard and a cord fell across the ship. The means of rescue had arrived. The cord was soon replaced by a hawser, fastened on board to the stump of a mast, on shore to the trunk of a tree; thus enabling a basket to travel backwards and forwards along the hawser by means of the cord.

One of the sailors undertook the first journey to land and back to test and show the safety of that mode of transport. Mrs. Thornhill and her elder son were the first to be landed without accident; then Señora Manuela,

still bewailing the loss of her sister; next, Mr. Thornhill and his little boy; then came the turn of Señor Nuñez, followed by other passengers, some of whose absurd fears caused considerable delay. Finally I was on the point of bidding good-bye to the Edward myself, when the ship gave a lurch and the hawser broke. Luckily the basket just then was on its return voyage, and consequently empty.

Before communication was re-established the hurricane returned with fresh violence, only the wind had shifted to the S.W. The rain fell again, more heavy than ever. The rolling of the thunder, the whistling of the wind, reëchoed from the neighbouring mountain, once more isolated us from the world of the living. But we ceased to be apprehensive respecting the issue. The islands were a protective breakwater against the waves; the sea became less rough, and we could perceive that the hurricane, pursuing its onward course, was leaving us with the same rapidity as it had reached us.

At one in the morning the weather was supportable; communication with the shore was renewed, and I was one of the first to be sent on land. Scarcely had I arrived there when the reaction from the moral and physical fatigues endured, aggravated by the pain of the wound in my head, brought on their inevitable consequences. I fainted away completely, and fell on the ground as dead.

When I came to myself I was lying in bed. Between the openings of a thick bamboo blind a few rays of sunshine were streaming, in which thousands of brilliant motes were dancing, mixed up with insects with bright shining wings. This spectacle absorbed my whole attention. I

thought only of watching those glittering marvels, which seemed the most beautiful things I had ever beheld. I fretted like a child if they flew away and did not quickly return. On trying to turn an instant the better to observe their movements, the pain made me scream aloud, thereby awakening my intelligence as well as my bodily consciousness. I then looked around with curiosity, asking myself where I could be, why I was in bed, without the slightest recollection of my recent shipwreck. At the same time I raised my hand to my head, which felt as if heavily loaded with lead. It was bandaged. The white-washed chamber, more than plain and modest, was furnished only with the iron bedstead on which I lay, a walnut-wood table and chest of drawers, a looking-glass a few inches square, and two straw-bottomed chairs. A bell-pull hung within my reach; I mechanically seized it. An attendant appeared, and informed me that I was in the military hospital, in one of the rooms appropriated to sick officers, and that my wound was so serious as to need repose. He urged me therefore to keep myself calm, and quietly await the doctor's visit.

CHAPTER II.

You will remember that, while the ship was stranded, Pedrita had been carried overboard by a wave, and that José Rivero had plunged into the sea, with the hope of rescuing her, at the risk of his life. At that moment the shore was crowded with the inhabitants of the island, who saw the flashes of our alarm-gun, though the hurricane prevented their hearing the report, and who, under

the able directions of M. Richard, the acting commissary, were making every effort to save us from drowning. Their attention was attracted by the young lady's white dress, as she struggled for a moment on the surface. Two sturdy negroes swam to her assistance, and succeeded in bringing her on shore, just in time to prevent her being drawn back into deep water by the retreating waves. She was immediately taken to the village, where Madame Richard kindly received her, and by skilful treatment speedily brought her to life. She anxiously inquired after her father and sister. They reassured her by what they believed at the time to be a pious falsehood, but which soon proved to be the actual truth; for, not long afterwards, the father and daughter were weeping for joy in each other's arms.

The poor old man, on being landed after Manuela had been put on shore, learnt from her that her sister had been saved and was impatiently awaiting their arrival; but overcome as he was by emotion even more than by fatigue, it was all he could do to traverse the short distance which separated him from his recovered child. After their first interchange of affection, Pedrita very naturally inquired what had become of José Rivero. Neither her father nor her sister, in their excusably egotistical joy, had anticipated the question. They hesitated, turned pale, and could give no reply. Nevertheless, they were at last obliged to tell the poor girl that her lover had probably made a useless sacrifice of his life, for he had not yet been found. She heard the news without shedding a tear, simply saying, 'I will go in search of him.' In vain did they insist on the folly of such an

enterprise in her present state of weakness. She walked out of the house with tottering steps and convulsive movements, followed by her friends, who were at their wits' end to know what to do. But after a few paces they were stopped by the information that two men had been found on the shore—one quite dead, battered on the rocks; the other faint and bleeding, but still alive. Both had been transported to the hospital. While the Spaniard and his daughter were still trembling between hope and fear, Phelipe rushed up to them with the welcome news that the living man was his brother. The dead man was the ship's mate, who had been swept overboard unperceived, and doubtless during the second burst of the hurricane; the poor fellow had been literally brayed. Besides him two other victims of the shipwreck were found; namely, the Creoles, who had sought in drunkenness a stimulant to their cowardice, and had only found death.

I learnt all this at the hospital while under treatment for the wound in my head, which was doubtless caused by my having been driven by that big wave against the capstan to which Mrs. Thornhill was lashed, while I was looking after the safety of her child. During the morning of my return to consciousness I was several times seized with giddiness, and it was only in the afternoon that Mr. Thornhill acquainted me with the circumstances which I have just related. He added that the Edward was completely lost, and that, the shipwreck having been signalled, he expected very soon to reach Pointe-à-Pitre, whence a government steamer was expected.

In fact, the very next morning he and his wife came to bid me

good-bye, at the same time heartily thanking me for the assistance I was so fortunate as to be able to give them. They warmly invited me to visit them at Boston, U.S., where they intended fixing their residence. The other passengers also took their departure, so that there were left at La Terre d'en Haut—as the place was called—only the Spaniards and myself.

In a fortnight I was sufficiently recovered to leave the military hospital. The first thing after quitting my room was to go and see José Rivero, whom I knew to be still far from well. Ever since the shipwreck he had been delirious, recognising no one about him, sometimes unconscious and motionless, sometimes violently agitated, in which case he uttered incoherent phrases with great volubility, amongst which Pedrita's name was heard more frequently than anything else. Phelipe never left his brother, and Pedrita easily obtained permission to share with the Sisters of Charity from the hospital the task of nursing her lover. Manuela and her father likewise devoted to him a portion of the day.

When I entered the sick man's chamber he was sitting up in bed, with fixed staring eyes, piteously calling for his brother and his bride, and seeming by his gestures to be struggling with some frightful delusion. Pedrita, who was sitting close to the bed, rose, took his hands in hers, and spoke to him softly and affectionately. The sound of that beloved voice acted on him like a charm; he closed his eyes, and fell back on his pillow. This scene, which occurred twenty times a day, wore out the poor girl's strength more and more. She grew pale and thin, but in my eyes only all the more lovely, while fulfilling the office of consoling angel. I would have given

my existence to see her thus at my own bedside, with my hands in hers, and saying, 'I am still here to love you,' as the most effective of cordials.

Well, it is no use denying it. I may as well confess my weakness. The very first time I saw Pedrita, she made an impression on me I had never felt before, but whose depth and nature I was then far from understanding. It was merely natural admiration, I thought, of a very pleasing and lovely young person. The regret at her loss, which I believed to be certain, would have been felt, not merely by myself, but by any person endowed with common humanity. It was only at her lover's bedside that jealousy revealed to me the real state of the case.

When I saw José hanging between life and death, I was even fool enough, and wicked enough, almost to wish that he might die, in the hope that I might have the chance of coming forward as charming Pedrita's comforter.

Two days afterwards, José recovered consciousness, thereby giving her the opportunity of thanking him for risking his own life in the hope of saving hers. Happiness is a powerful restorative, and his return to health made rapid progress.

I ought to have taken my departure at once, but an irresistible power chained me, spellbound, to the spot. My visits to José Rivero were rare, and I especially avoided meeting Pedrita there. When I saw them together, the pangs of jealousy tortured my heart, and it was only by a superhuman effort that my countenance did not reveal my sufferings. Señor Nuñez, who had not the same interest as his daughters in confining himself to the hospital, was glad to accompany me in the

short walks which my state of weakness permitted me to take. We often talked about his daughter, but the worthy old man never suspected that I adored her.

He had left Barcelona, he told me, to establish himself at Porto Rico with his wife and two daughters while they were still quite young. Three years ago his wife died, and the loss rendered Porto Rico so insupportable that he agreed to undertake the management of a commercial house at Tobago. The brothers Rivero were also natives of Barcelona, and their community of origin procured them an introduction to the Nuñez family when they came to settle at Porto Rico. Madame Nuñez had conceived the idea of marrying her daughters to these young men, who were in every respect a desirable alliance; but her death put a check on the accomplishment of the project, although it did not absolutely break it off. Consequently the brothers, on visiting Tobago, met with so cordial a reception from the friends of their childhood that the father's consent was obtained without difficulty. It was decided to celebrate the double marriage at Barcelona, where both couples would settle down, after selling off their property at Porto Rico. Señor Nuñez would leave Tobago and retire from business. It was clear I had not a chance, not a leg to stand on; and yet I could not drive Pedrita out of my head.

I learnt all this during our daily walks amidst the dull and monotonous scenery of La Terre d'en Haut, one of the seven islands which compose the group of Les Saintes. Three only are inhabited; the population—some twelve hundred negroes or mulattoes—is sustained by scanty crops of maize, sweet potatoes, yams, and the poultry to which their climate

seems especially favourable, if one may judge from the delicacy of their flesh. There are also a few middling oxen and sheep, but above all delicious grapes.

France, to whom *Les Saintes* belong, has converted them into a naval penitentiary, and the melancholy character of the landscape is increased by the sight of subaltern officers conducting groups of gray-clad men, who march to their labours with the listlessness peculiar to compulsory prison-work.

The rock is barely covered with a thin stratum of earth. Not a rivulet or brook is to be seen. Here and there the water drains into hollows, forming ponds which the inhabitants guard with jealous care. Those who are too poor to have a cistern in their house have nothing but this stagnant water to employ for household purposes.

These ponds are fringed around their edges with the velvet trumpets of pistias; in the middle grow white nenuphars, which the inhabitants apply to an original use. When inclined to drink, they gather a leaf with its foot-stalk, and then employ the said stalk as a siphon, which conveys the water to their mouth filtered almost clear. In fact, as everybody knows, the floating leaves of nenuphars are attached to the bottom by very long stalks containing large empty spaces, called by botanists lacunes. These lacunes communicate with each other by very small holes, which allow the sucked-up water to pass, but arrest like a strainer the insects, fragments of vegetables, or other impurities which it may contain.

One of these ponds, which bears the pretty name of the Birds' Watering-place, is almost picturesque. Situated on the summit of a lofty hill, whence the eye scans a vast horizon, it is sur-

rounded by the tallest trees which exist on the island. There are fig-trees, studded with small red fruits; tecomas, displaying pale-violet flowers; knotted capers, whose half-open pods are lined within with purple velvet, on which repose, like pearls in a casket, beads of the purest white. Delightful coolness pervades the spot, while the ear is amused by the cheerful chattering of many-hued birds drawn thither by the attractions of food and drink. *Les Saintes* contain none of those charming ferns which are met with at every step in the neighbouring islands. Their place is taken by frightful cactuses armed with spines whose wounds are not unattended with danger. Here may be found the strangest forms assumed by this singular family of plants, which seems to aim at the reproduction of every known shape of geometrical solid. In some spots euphorbias have the mastery; higher up are crotons, whose dull-gray foliage affords scanty protection to a few stunted grasses. In the low grounds, moistened by brackish water, the machineel vigorously spreads its fragile branches laden with shining leaves. If not exactly gifted with the deadly power which tradition has assigned to it, it is nevertheless a dangerous tree. Its juice inflicts a burn on the skin, like the application of a red-hot iron, and its contact with any mucous membrane produces very serious injury. The temptation offered by its golden fruits is less to be feared, because the burning heat they immediately impress on the lips is a sufficient warning not to swallow them.

As I had not been able to attend the funeral of the Edward's mate, I begged Señor Nuñez to conduct me to his grave. After climbing a low hill covered with

sweet-scented but thorny lantanas we entered a deep dell, in the middle of which is a brackish pond surrounded and overhung with thick machineels. I shall never forget the impression made by our descent into this valley of death through the impenetrable shade of those ill-omened trees. I asked myself whether, like Dante, I had not entered a dark forest, morally as well as physically.

The cemetery, situated on a sandy slope, and enclosed by walls of dry masonry, is entered by a little wooden gate. A few decaying crosses with half-effaced inscriptions, a stunted wild vegetation, thousands of holes made by the land-crabs to get at and feast on the bodies interred there, are the most striking features of the spot. In the midst of this scene of desolation our poor mate was laid to take his final rest.

My stay at Les Saintes could not last for ever. I was completely cured, corporeally. A steamer was shortly to touch at Pointe-à-Pitre, and I had no excuse for remaining longer in the island. I was aware that in the course of a few days José would be able to bear the voyage to Guadeloupe. What, then, had I to hope for?

One evening, while strolling about the streets of the village, with all sorts of bitter fancies working in my brain, I found myself face to face with Pedrita. She was alone, returning from the hospital to her lodgings. With the thoughtless egotism of happy people, she began talking of José's recovery and the bright prospects in store for them at Barcelona. Something doubtless in my countenance and manner betrayed my secret; for she abruptly stopped short, and then offering her hand, gravely said, 'Good-bye. Should

you come to Barcelona, do not forget your old shipwrecked friends. I shall tell José I have seen you.'

I could only press her hand to my lips and take leave of her so, without uttering a word. It was impossible for me not to confess that she was a brave loyal girl to the very last.

Since that time, the chances of travel once happened to throw me in the way of the captain of the *Edward*. He shook me warmly by the hand, and in his bluff way said, 'You're wonderfully better now, I see, than when we parted. You were getting sadly spoony over that pretty Spanish girl. Why, it pulled you down worse than the shipwreck did. Nobody could doubt which way the wind blew. Certainly, that Barcelona nut was hard to crack. But you went to market a little too late, young fellow. Other customers had been there before you. Very vexatious, and no mistake! But I don't think you'll die of that complaint. I was once taken bad in the same way myself. It didn't last long; but you do feel very bad while it does last, don't you? My charmer had the sweetest blue eyes you ever saw in your life; but after I was cured I found out she was only a silly nincompoop, who thought it fine to say "No" when she really meant "Yes." It would have been a comfort to her if I had gone into a consumption for love; instead of which I married my present missus, and got fat. You'll do the same before six months are over, and you'll meet with better luck next time. Heart alive! there's as good fish still in the sea as ever came out of it. And as 'tis a long time since we met, suppose we dine together to-day; for I'm off to the West Indies again to-morrow. What say you, eh? That's right! You will.'

C. T.

TRAINING FOR 'THE EIGHTS.'

I BELIEVE that the mothers of Great Britain are apt to be thrown into a state of great mental perturbation by the knowledge that their sons are in that peculiar 'state of life' which is universally known to the initiated, and yet by them so vaguely designated, as *being in training*. There is formed an uninviting picture in the mind—of an emaciated youth with sunken cheeks and hollow eyes, whose daily fare is toast, whose beverage is water, and whose days are entirely devoted to prodigious bodily exercise; and they fondly believe that such a course, if persisted in, will—Well, I cannot say how far they may indulge in the flights of imagination; that depends on the individual. Now this is an illusion which I should like to dispel, and show that we had very 'good times,' to use a pardonable Americanism, training for 'the Eights' last summer. The word 'Eights' alone should suffice to imply that I mean the college-races at Oxford, or rather 'training for the Eights' should imply that I mean training for the college-races at Oxford. Those glorious races I will not describe here; for the names of the crews, and the bumps that they made, were they not written in the columns of the sporting papers?

Of course our Eight, or an eight of ours, had been on the river from the beginning of the term; nay, rumour said that individual members had been at work on 'sliders' long before, and that the 'Vac.' and the boatmen had been the only witnesses of their diligent

efforts. But it was scarcely three weeks before the first of those eight eventful days that real earnest training began. Then it was that a table in hall was set apart down by the door 'for the crew, sir,' as the scout informed the innocent freshman who could find no other resting-place and had esconced himself there. Then it was that Stroke was seen about the quad, buttonholing the casual passer-by, and, in his blandest tones—'I say, old man, you'll give the Eight a breakfast, won't you?' Then it was that our Captain, responding to some mild query, said, in a voice that all might hear, 'I should think so, indeed. We'll go round the Parks to-morrow: all be at the Lodge at seven. And mind you're there, Cox' (this gruffly); 'you'll have to run round—get some of your fat down. I think you ought to go and see all these men in bed at half-past ten' (this last more amenably).

So the next morning saw—well, it was the first day, and I won't say how many of us appeared at the Lodge. But, to make up for it, we all met at breakfast, with one of the 'old men' afterwards—nine of us, including Cox, seated round the irregular tables, fighting for the enormous vessel employed for the concoction of tea, struggling with chops, steaks, poached eggs, watercresses, and last, but not least, the all-important 'squish.' No, I don't know the origin of the word; but it means marmalade. But these first days are irregular—every-

body's fault, particularly Cox's; and of course our Captain said he was the only regular one—said it plaintively, did this much ill-used individual.

We had all been at it hard for a week now. 'Half-past six, sir,' says my scout. And I grunt out, 'Call me again in twenty minutes.' Woe betide me if he fails! He is faithful, and a quarter-past seven sees six of us ready in every kind of wondrous garb. There was one who always wore a 'butterfly' cap, an irreproachable coat, a dirty pair of flannels, and his second-best comforter. We others varied our attire in every stage of the disreputable, having a general look of 'untubbedness' about us, and rather unkempt hair. There were six of us; even that irrepressible Cox, who was hardly ever punctual, had turned up. Said the Captain, 'It's no use waiting for those other fellows; come on.'

So off we went to the Parks, where, just inside the gates, we met Five and Four returning.

'Don't believe you've been round at all,' says Stroke the suspicious. 'Where's the young un?'

That's Four's brother, and the individual in question, it would appear, is seedy; but we know all about that. Said Seven, *which* he was the Captain,

'Now, Cox, you've got to run round.'

'All right; but sha'n't I eat a lot for breakfast?'

'No, I'll be hanged if you do; I'll see to that. Go on, you young—'

But Cox is 'lost to sight, to memory dear,' or, at any rate, out of hearing by this time.

By about a quarter to eight the terriers have been taken to their quarters, and we are back in our rooms, to tub and clothe ourselves in more presentable habiliments.

This matutinal promenade gave, or should have given, the best of appetites for breakfast; but the only unfortunate thing was that the Cox got hungry too. Alas, there was no thinning that Cox!

At half-past eight some two-thirds of the crew are grouped in an uncomfortable sort of mass round the fireplace of our host, waiting for breakfast, the punctuality or unpunctuality of which depends upon the scout officiating. This pause is always awkward, as several of the men are in all probability not acquainted with the owner of the rooms, or at any rate not upon intimate terms. This difficulty Cox would appear fully to appreciate, as he seldom, if ever, entered the room till the rest of the party were well occupied with the first mutton-chops, and received his share of abuse all round in consequence. Then would enter sheepishly the individual so conspicuous by his absence in the Parks; finding it useless to disprove the various depreciatory exclamations that greet him, he is obliged to acknowledge his guilt, whereupon 'No eggs for you this morning!' sternly from the head of the table.

The host on these occasions is quite a subordinate, who finds his time completely occupied in attending to the various dishes of the *menu* I have already mentioned. He not unfrequently finds it incumbent on him in a meek voice to inquire 'how the boat went yesterday,' boating being as likely as not a matter upon which he is profoundly ignorant, or he would not have to ask the question. This very probably gives rise to a hot discussion, in which no opportunity will be spared of abusing Cox for his yesterday's *course*, and—But preserve us from boating 'shop'!

Some one will then exclaim

in a suggestive whisper to his neighbour, 'I wonder if there are any oranges!' If there should not be, our host, who somehow has overheard, apologises profusely, and immediately despatches his scout to procure some. I believe Five and Six were so tenacious about the oranges merely because of the excellent amusement the pips afforded them, for a furious cannonade would be maintained until they were demolished. After having 'satisfied the desire of eating and drinking,' and having made a considerable mess in his rooms, we would tender our thanks to the hospitable friend and disperse.

At one o'clock we met again for a dinner of the plainest—fish, a joint, and pudding somewhat of the kind that the doctor recommends as 'slope.' Rather an uninteresting operation, this midday feeding of the animals; but fortunately it was soon over, and one could do what one liked, short of indulging in any extra victuals or cooling beverages for an hour or so. That is not very long in a period of three weeks' slavery, for the greater part of the mornings was generally occupied with lectures and such considerations.

Then at half-past three or four we all trooped down to the river, and, getting into flannels, perused our sporting oracles and other papers till we were ready to start. Then at length, when all delinquents were gathered in from the tow-path and seated in their places, 'Are you ready? Paddle!' and off we went, to easy by the green barge and row on to Ifley; sometimes returning, and after a pause of an hour or so and some 'tub-pairs,' starting again over the same water to Ifley, to do a 'course,' hard rowing all the way coming up; or passing through the lock, rowing sharp from Ken-

nington Island to Sandford, and gradually home again. Sometimes we did not return from the first journey to Ifley, but passed right on from Kennington and Sandford to Nuneham bridge, and turning just beyond it (Coxens, beware!); then seven miles home again, with a very good appetite for supper after the fourteen or fifteen miles' row. Supper at eight, with the inevitable solids and two glasses of beer (these details!), with surly faces if the work had been unsatisfactory, or an extra glass of beer if the Captain was content; and then the day was over, and half-past ten *should have* seen us all in bed. So three weeks went by—three weeks of something that is far better than slavery, though we were all really slaves to the oar, bound by fixed hours and forms, engaged by a mutual understanding to do whatever our Captain enjoined, till the last of the eight-day races were over.

Therefore let not the mere word *training* strike terror into the hearts of anxious friends. Let those who imagine that it means starvation conceal themselves behind the curtains at a training breakfast, and this will complete the disillusion. No one who has passed through it in his University career will ever forget it. Forget! No; he will rather look back upon it as a pleasant ordeal, and most sociable tyranny. Thus I look back to those bright days—sweeping grandly down the stream in the full summer sun, with the hope of success to flush us.

Should you wish to know what boat this was whose simple daily doings I have chronicled here, I will only say it was a boat that did very well, a boat that did not disgrace its college, a boat that never will.

A TOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA.*

THERE are few *littérateurs* who have imported more variety into their labours than the indefatigable author of the work now before us. As a novelist his fame is in all the families and circulating libraries of the kingdom. He is at home in the hunting-field and in the cathedral close; his studies have made him conversant with the rivalries of sporting life as well as the serener and more celestial jealousies of ecclesiasticism. In the latter phase of his activity he has very distinctly coquetted with theology, the only science, except the political and social, with which he appears at all anxious to establish any very vivid connection. The affairs of our planet, with which it appears to be the modest ambition of Mr. Trollope to be familiar, have always had for him a kind of diffused fascination, and the widespread interests of Greater Britain have supplied a patriotic motive to his sympathy and a glow of vigour to his unwearied pen. A year ago his claim to be the all-comprehensive annalist and commentator of colonial life was only invalidated by one single exception: 'South Africa' was the only colony which he had not 'done,' and about which he had not written a book. The present volumes issue *à la bonne heure* to remove the impatient reproach of a past incompleteness; and to Mr. Trollope belongs, we believe, the unique boast—*pace* Mr. Fox Bourne and others,

who have treated of our colonies collectively—of having bestowed on each the distinction of a separate description.

The annexation of the Transvaal was the circumstance which precipitated in Mr. Trollope's mind a long-standing desire into an immediate resolution. Clearly now, as he writes, there was an additional reason for going. Sir Theophilus Shepstone had

'done a very high-handed thing as to which it might be the duty of a Briton travelling with a pen in his hand to make a strong remonstrance. Or again it might be his duty to pat that sturdy Briton on the back—with pen and ink—and hold his name up to honour as having been sturdy in a righteous cause. If I had premeditated a journey to South Africa a year or two since, when South Africa was certainly not very much in men's mouths, there was much more to reconcile me to the idea now that Confederation and the Transvaal were in every man's mouth.'

If we point out the fact that Mr. Trollope's visit was a hasty one, and that his work suffers in consequence as an incomplete and unsymmetrical record, we may do so not only without ill-nature, but under his own auspices; for it is a misfortune of which he himself makes an ingenuous confession. But he conscientiously endeavours to make up for his own lack of information by consulting the most trusted works, whether historical, popular, legal, or political, bearing upon the questions which he has reviewed; and he has not disdained to supplement the more open sources of knowledge by the reading and consultation of 'almanacs, pamphlets, lectures, letters, and blue-books.'

* *South Africa*. By Anthony Trollope. 2 vols. (Chapman & Hall, 1878.)

The map which Mr. Henry Hall supplies to the first volume of Mr. Trollope's *South Africa* is to be commended for a like diligence of compilation. All the available official authorities, as well as the independent contributions of travellers and pioneers, have been used in the production of this admirable aid to the identification of events and places, which incorporates additions and corrections from surveys and explorations to the present year, still so youthful, of 1878. On a scale of about fifty miles to the inch, it exhibits the physical and commercial characteristics of the whole country from west to east, and from the Cape of Good Hope to the twenty-fifth degree of south latitude. It thus embraces the western and eastern provinces of the Cape Colony, Griqualand West (more popularly known as the Diamond Fields), Kafraria, Natal, Zululand, the Orange River Free State, and the Transvaal, indicating throughout the mountains, hills, valleys, passes, fountains, ports, towns, settlements, military posts and forts, missionary stations, and railways, the last being distinguished either as complete, or as in progress, or sanctioned. In the course of Mr. Trollope's hurried tour he passed through much of this extensive and most interesting region, one of the most notable exceptions to the exhaustiveness of his itinerary arising from his omission to visit Basuto Land, in the north-east of the Cape Colony, and bounded by Kafraria, Natal, and the Orange River Free State. His adventures are of the mildly exciting order, not calculated, if told by an Othello, whose eloquence required all the advantages of 'most disastrous chances,' to compel the love of a Desdemona, but still adapted, when narrated by Mr.

Trollope, to keep up in the reader a spirit of unflagging attention. We do not purpose to be of his company, therefore, at every step or stage of his journey; it will suffice to join and rejoin him as he passes from point to point of more than common significance and interest. It is not our intention, again, to follow Mr. Trollope at any length into the 'early Dutch history' and the 'English history' of South Africa; for in these departments of his work he is answerable merely for the presentation of materials which he found ready to his hand; and we prefer to give especially the results of his own observation. But we take his narrative of an incident which occurred some twenty years ago, and which he characterises as one that

'seems to be the most remarkable and most unintelligible of all the events known to us in Kafir history. At this time Sir George Grey was Governor of the Colony—a most remarkable man, who had been Governor of South Australia and of New Zealand, who had been once recalled from his office of Governor at the Cape and then restored, who was sent back to New Zealand as Governor in the hottest of the Maori warfare, and who now lives in that Colony and is at this moment—the beginning of 1878—singularly enough, Prime Minister in the dependency in which he has twice been the Queen's vicegerent. Whatever he may be, or may have been, in New Zealand, he certainly left behind him at the Cape of Good Hope a very great reputation. There can be no doubt that of all our South African Governors he was the most popular—and probably the most high-handed. In his time there came up a prophecy among the Kafirs that they were to be restored to all their pristine glories and possessions, not by living aid, but by the dead. Their old warriors would return to them from the distant world, and they themselves would all become young, beautiful, and invincible. But great faith was needed. They would find fat cattle in large caves numerous as their hearts might desire; and rich fields of flowing corn would spring up for them as food was required. Only they must kill all their own cattle, and destroy all their own grain, and must refrain from sowing a seed. This they did with perfect faith, and all Kafirdom was well-nigh starved to death. The English and Dutch around them did what they

could for their relief—had indeed done what they could to prevent the self-immolation; but the more that the white men interfered, the more confirmed were the black men in their faith. It is said that 50,000 of them perished of hunger. Since that day there has been no considerable Kafir war, and the spirit of the race has been broken.

Whence came the prophecy? There is a maxim among lawyers that the criminal is to be looked for among those who have profited by the crime. That we the British holders of the South African soil, and we only, were helped on in our work by this catastrophe is certain. No such prophecy—nothing like to it—ever came up among the Kafirs before. They have ever been a superstitious people, given to witchcraft and much afraid of witches. But till this fatal day they were never tempted to believe that the dead would come back to them, or to look for other food than what the earth gave them by its natural increase. It is more than probable that the prophecy ripened in the brain of an imaginative and strong-minded Anglo-Saxon. This occurred in 1857 when the terrible exigencies of the Indian Mutiny had taken almost every redcoat from the Cape to the Peninsula. Had the Kafirs tried their old method of warfare at such a period, it might have gone very hard indeed with the Dutch and English farmers of the Eastern Province.

The cause of this singular freak of superstition is not, however, to be found in the Anglo-Saxon agency which Mr. Trollope accuses; and a more critical memory than his has already called attention to the fact that nothing in the history of the Cape Colony is better established than that a young woman of Krel's tribe, named Nongans, who professed to speak under inspiration, was the author of this unfortunate prophecy. 'Nongans was a Kafir medium, and the tribe unluckily yielded to an impulse of credulity as respects the supernatural, which is far from being confined to savages.'

Frequently in the course of Mr. Trollope's pages he moralises over the relative failure of South Africa as a sphere of British colonisation, as compared with the younger settlements in Australia and New Zealand; and the ever-recurring reason, expressed

in slightly varying terms, is said to be the unwillingness of the British emigrant to seek a country where he would have to encounter in the lists of labour the antagonism of his red or black brethren. In one of its forms this reason is embodied in the following extract from the chapter devoted to a description of Capetown:

'The population is something over 80,000, which, when we remember that the place is more than two centuries old, and that it is the capital of an enormous country, and the seat of the colonial legislature, is not great. Melbourne, which is just two hundred years younger than Capetown, contains above a quarter of a million of inhabitants. Melbourne was of course made what it is by gold; but then so have there been diamonds to enhance the growth of Capetown. But the truth, I take it, is that a white working population will not settle itself at any place where it will have to measure itself against coloured labour. A walk through the streets of Capetown is sufficient to show the stranger that he has reached a place not inhabited by white men, and a very little conversation will show him further that he is not speaking with an English-speaking population. The gentry no doubt are white and speak English. At any rate, the members of Parliament do so, and the clergymen, and the editors, for the most part, and the good-looking young ladies,—but they are not the population. He will find that everything about him is done by coloured persons of various races, who among themselves speak a language which I am told the Dutch in Holland will hardly condescend to recognise as their own. Perhaps, as regards labour, the most valuable race is that of the Malays, and these are the descendants of slaves whom the early Dutch settlers introduced from Java. The Malays are so-called Mahomedans, and some are to be seen flaunting about the town in turbans and flowing robes. These, I understand, are allowed so to dress themselves as a privilege in reward for some pious work done—a journey to Mecca probably. Then there is a Hottentot admixture, a sprinkling of the Guinea-coast negro, and a small, but no doubt increasing, Kafir element. But all this is leavened and brought into some agreement with European modes of action and thought by the preponderating influence of Dutch blood. So that the people, though idle, are not apathetic as savages, nor quite so indifferent as Orientals. But yet there is so much of the savage and so much of the Oriental that the ordinary Englishman does not come out and work among them. Wages are high, and living, though the prices of provisions are apt to vary, is not

costly. Nor is the climate averse to European labourers, who can generally work without detriment in regions outside the tropics. But forty years ago slave-labour was the labour of the country, and the stains, the apathy, the unprofitableness of slave-labour still remain. It had a curse about it which fifty years have not been able to remove.'

Again from the same chapter we transcribe a paragraph which offers an interesting contribution to an understanding of Mr. Trollope's idiosyncrasy, and forms the reason for our already-expressed opinion, that the world is to expect no work on astronomy from his otherwise versatile pen.

'I should weary my reader were I to tell him of all the civilised institutions—one by one—which are in daily use in Capetown. There is a Custom House, and a Sailors' Home, and there are hospitals, and an observatory—very notable, I believe, as being well placed in reference to the Southern hemisphere—and a Government Herbarium, and a lunatic asylum at Robben Island. Of Mr. Stone, the Astronomer Royal and lord of the Observatory, I must say one word in special praise. "Do you care for the stars?" he asked me. In truth I do not care for the stars. I care, I think, only for men and women, and so I told him. "Then," said he, "I won't bother you to come to the Observatory. But if you wish to see stars I will show them to you." I took him at his word and did not then go to the Observatory. This I had said with some fear and trembling, as I remembered well the disgust which Agazziz once expressed when I asked permission not to be shown his museum at Cambridge, Massachusetts. But Mr. Stone seemed to understand my deficiency, and if he pitied me he abstained from expressing his pity. Afterwards I did make a special visit to the Observatory—which is maintained by the imperial Government and not by the Colony—and was shown all the wonders of the southern heavens. They were very beautiful, but I did not understand much about them.'

Mr. Trollope, however, is not insensible to the charms and the grandeur of terrestrial scenery, and he frequently expresses his admiration of the garden-like beauty of the vineyards and orange-groves, as well as the romance of the woods and the caves, and the sublimity of the mountains, which he observed in the Cape Colony,

of which the following passage is generally descriptive, although it derives its immediate or occasional inspiration from Robertson, a town and district about a hundred miles to the east, and slightly to the north, of Capetown.

'From Worcester we went on to a little town called Robertson, which is also the capital of an electoral division. The country here is altogether a country of mountains, varying from three to seven thousand feet high. The valleys between them are broad, so as to give ample space for agriculture, if only agriculture can be made to pay. Having heard much of the continual plains of South Africa, I had imagined that everything beyond the hills immediately surrounding Capetown would be flat; but in lieu of that I found myself travelling through a country in which one series of mountains succeeds another for hundreds of miles. The Cape Colony is very large, especially the Western Province, which extends almost from the 28th to much below the 34th degree of latitude S., and from the 17th to the 23d of longitude E. Of this immense area I was able to see comparatively only a small part; but in what I did see I was never out of the neighbourhood of mountains. The highest mountain in South Africa is Cathkin Peak in Natal, and that is over 10,000 feet. In the districts belonging to the Cape Colony the highest is in Basuto, and is the Mont aux Sources. The highest in the Western Province is called The Seven Weeks Poort, which is in the neighbourhood of Swellendam, and belongs to the district of which I am now speaking. It is 7600 feet high. As the first and most important consequence of this, the making of roads within a couple of hundred miles of Capetown has been a matter of great difficulty. In every direction passes through the mountains have had to be found, which when found have required great skill and a very heavy expenditure before they could be used for roads. But a second consequence has been that a large extent of magnificent scenery has been thrown open, which, as the different parts of the world are made nearer to each other by new discoveries and advancing science, will become a delight and a playground to travellers—as are the Alps and the Pyrenees and the Apennines in Europe. At present I think that but few people in England are aware that among the mountains of the Cape Colony there is scenery as grand as in Switzerland or the south-west of France. And the fact that such scenery is close to them attracts the notice of but a small portion of the inhabitants of the Colony itself. The Dutch, I fancy, regarded the mountains simply as barriers or disagreeable obstacles, and the English community which has come since has hardly as

yet achieved idleness sufficient for the true enjoyment of tourist travelling.'

The principal drawbacks to the unlimited prosecution of successful agriculture in the happy valleys which occur between the ridges of more elevated lands are the scarcity of labour and of tanks or reservoirs for the storage of water, which, falling in abundance on the tops and slopes of the hills, runs down to the sea without fertilising the rich but thirsty soil. The population of the Cape Colony is preponderatingly Dutch, and their kindness and good-nature meet with a frank and full recognition from Mr. Trollope.

'I am bound to say that I was never refused anything which I asked of a Dutchman in South Africa. I must remark also that often as I broke down on my travels—and I did break down very often and sometimes in circumstances that were by no means promising—there always came a *Deus ex machina* for my immediate relief. A generous Dutchman would lend me a horse or a cart, or a needy Englishman would appear with an animal to sell when the getting of a horse under any circumstances had begun to appear impossible. On one occasion a jibbing brute fell as he was endeavouring to kick everything to pieces, and nearly cut his leg in two; but a kind-hearted colonist appeared immediately on the scene, with a very pretty girl in his cart, and took me on to my destination. And yet one often travels hour after hour throughout the whole day without meeting a fellow-traveller.'

Mr. Trollope enters somewhat minutely into the art and mystery of ostrich-farming, into the details of which, however interesting, our space will not allow us to follow him. Some of the more salient facts, however, may be stated as he records them:

'I was taken from Grahamstown to see an ostrich farm about fifteen miles distant. The establishment belongs to Mr. Douglas, who is, I believe, among the ostrich farmers of the Colony about the most successful, and who was, if not the first, the first who did the work on a large scale. He is, moreover, the patentee for an egg-hatching machine, or incubator, which is now in use among many of the feather-growers of the district. Mr. Douglas occupies about 1200 acres of rough ground,

formerly devoted to sheep-farming. The country around was all used not long since as sheep-walks, but seems to have so much deteriorated by changes in the grasses as to be no longer profitable for that purpose. But it will feed ostriches.

At this establishment I found about 800 of those birds, which, taking them all round, young and old, were worth about 30*l.* a piece. Each bird fit for plucking gives two crops of feathers a year, and produces, on an average, feathers to the value of 15*l.* per annum. The creatures feed themselves unless when sick or young, and live upon the various bushes and grasses of the land. The farm is divided out into paddocks, and, with those which are breeding, one cock with two hens occupies each paddock. The young birds—for they do not breed till they are three years old—or those which are not paired, run in flocks of thirty or forty each. They are subject to diseases which of course require attention, and are apt to damage themselves, sometimes breaking their own bones, and getting themselves caught in the wire fences. Otherwise they are hardy brutes, who can stand much heat and cold, can do for long periods without water, who require no delicate feeding, and give at existing prices ample returns for the care bestowed upon them.

But, nevertheless, ostrich-farming is a precarious venture. The birds are of such value, a full-grown bird in perfect health being worth as much as 75*l.*, that there are of course risks of great loss. And I doubt whether the industry has, as yet, existed long enough for those who employ it to know all its conditions.

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I may add with regard to ostrich-farming that I have heard that 50 per cent per annum on the capital invested has been not uncommonly made. But I have heard also that all the capital invested has not been unfrequently lost. It must be regarded as a precarious business, and one which requires special adaptation in the person who conducts it. And to this must be added the fact that it depends entirely on a freak of fashion. Wheat and wool, cotton and coffee, leather and planks, men will certainly continue to want, and of these things the value will undoubtedly be maintained by competition for their possession. But ostrich-feathers may become a drug. When the nurse-maid affects them the duchess will cease to do so.'

The question of Kafir education is one which receives considerable attention from the hands of Mr. Trollope, as being at once one of the most important that has to be solved in South Africa, and one about which there exists the most violent difference of opinion

amongst those who have lived in any of its colonies. A traveller in the land by associating exclusively with one set of persons would be taught to think that here was to be found a certain and quick panacea for all the ills and dangers to which the country is subjected. Here lies the way by which, within an age or two, the population of the country may be made to drop its savagery and Kafirism and blanket-loving vagabondism, and become a people as fit to say their prayers and vote for members of Parliament as, at any rate, the ordinary English Christian constituent. Another traveller, falling into another and a different set, will be told by his South African associates that the Kafir is a very good fellow, and may be a very good servant, till he has been brought to sing psalms and to take pride in his rapidly-acquired book-learning, after which point in his education he becomes sly, a liar, a thief, and in all respects dangerous. Mr. Trollope frankly confesses the difficulty he experiences in forming an opinion between these two extremes. Believing most firmly in education, he would cease to believe in anything if he did not believe that education, if continued, would at least civilise; and he can conceive of no way of ultimately overcoming and dispelling what he is obliged to call the savagery of the Kafirs but by education. He recognises the fact as well-nigh a necessity, that whilst dropping something of his ignorance the savage drops something also of his simplicity. He can understand, therefore, why the employer of labour should prefer the unsophisticated Kafir; and he is by no means sure that if he were looking out for black labour, that he might make money out of it, untroubled with any of the desires

and designs of a far-reaching philanthropy, he should not eschew the Kafir from the schools. Mr. Trollope favours the introduction of industrial as well as literary civilisation; the training in useful handicrafts as well as the inculcation of religious sentiment which may be divorced from morality. He approves, therefore, such an institution as that of Lovedale, where upwards of three hundred Kafir lads are trained as wagon-makers, blacksmiths, printers, or bookbinders, or taught to make roads and to cultivate land. He expresses his assurance that no Kafir pupil can remain for years or even for months among European lessons and European habits without carrying away with him to his own people, when he goes amongst them, something of a civilising influence. He may perhaps forget much of the literary acquirement which has distinguished his humble academical career; but 'when he has once learned how to make a table stand square upon four legs, he has gained a power of helping his brother Kafirs which will never altogether desert him.'

In a chapter devoted to the consideration of the 'Condition of the Cape Colony,' Mr. Trollope has the following suggestive remarks as to the value of the diamond fields:

'In the Cape Colony, as in Australia, wool has been for many years the staple of the country; and, as in Australia, the importance, or seeming importance, of the staple produce has been cast into the shade by the great wealth of the gold which has been found there, so in South Africa has the same been done by the finding of diamonds. Up to the present time, however, the diamond district has not in truth belonged to the Cape Colony. Soon after these pages will have been printed it will probably be annexed. But the actual political possession of the land in which the diamonds or gold have been found has had little to do with the wealth which has flowed into the different Colonies from the finding of the treasures. That in each case has come from the

greatly increased consumption created by the finders. Men finding gold and diamonds eat and drink a great deal. The persons who sell such articles are enriched, and the articles are subject to taxation, and so a public revenue is raised. It is hence that the wealth comes rather than from the gold and diamonds themselves. Had it been possible that the possession of the land round the Kimberley mines should have been left in the hands of the native tribes, there would have been but little difference in the money result. The flour, the meat, the brandy, and the imported coats and boots would still have been carried up to Kimberley from the Cape Colony.'

Upon entering Natal we exchange the Kafir for the Zulu, who conceives himself to be a very superior sort of man, not as being equal to the white man, whom he reverences, but as being greatly above the other black races around him. And yet, as Mr. Trollope points out, he is not a man of ancient blood or of long-established supremacy. 'Zululand proper, with which we Britons have no concern, and where the Zulus live under an independent king of their own, is to the north of Natal, lying between the colony and the Portuguese possession called Delagoa Bay.' We transcribe the following account of the dreaded Zulu king Cetwayo, 'the spelling of whose name has become settled, but Cetch-way-o is the pronunciation which shows the speaker to be well up in his Zulu.' Cetwayo is the son of King Panda, who 'seems to have been a fat, do-nothing, good-natured sort of king—for a Zulu; and who died some years since—in his bed, if he had one.'

'Cetwayo has certainly a bad reputation generally, though he was till quite lately supposed to be favourable to the English as opposed to the Dutch. When dealing with the troubles of the Transvaal I shall have to say something of him in that respect. He has probably been the indirect cause of the annexation of that country. In Natal there are two opinions about the Zulu monarch. As the white man generally dislikes the black races by whom he is surrounded and troubled in South Africa—not averse by any means

to the individual with whom he comes in immediate contact, but despising and almost hating the people—Cetwayo and his subjects are as a rule evil spoken of among the Europeans of the adjacent Colony. He is accused of murdering his people right and left according to his caprices. That is the charge brought against him. But it is acknowledged that he does not murder white people, and I am not at all sure that there is any conclusive evidence of his cruelty to the blacks. He has his white friends, as I have said; and although they probably go a little too far in white-washing him, I am inclined to believe them when they assert that the spirit of European clemency and abhorrence from bloodshed has worked its way even into the Zulu court, and produced a respect for life which was unknown in the days of Chaka and Dingaan. It is no doubt the case that some of the missionaries who had been settled in Zululand have in the year that is last past—1877—left the country as though in a panic. I presume that the missionaries have gone because two or three of their converts were murdered. Two or three certainly have been murdered, but I doubt whether it was done by order of the chief. The converts have as a rule been safe—as have the missionaries—not from any love borne to them by Cetwayo, but because Cetwayo has thought them to be protected by English influence. Cetwayo has hitherto been quite alive to the expediency of maintaining peace with his white neighbours in Natal, though he could afford to despise his Dutch neighbours in the Transvaal. It has yet to be seen whether we shall be able to settle questions as to a line of demarcation between himself and us in the Transvaal without an appeal to force.

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Zululand is one of the problems which have next to be answered. Let my reader look at his map. Natal is a British Colony; so is now the Transvaal. The territory which he will see marked as Basuto Land has been annexed to the Cape Colony. Kafraria, which still nominally belongs to the natives, is almost annexed. The Kafrarian problem will soon be solved in spite of Krel. But Zululand, surrounded as it is by British Colonies and the Portuguese settlement at Delagoa Bay, is still a native country, in which the king or chief can live by his own laws and do as his soul lists. I am very far from recommending an extension of British interference; but if I know anything of British manners and British ways, there will be British interference in Zululand before long.

In the mean time our own Colony of Natal is peopled with Zulus whom we rule, not very regularly, but on the whole with success. They are, to my thinking, singularly amenable; and though I imagine they would vote us out of the country if a plebiscite were possible, they are

individually docile and well-mannered, and as savages are not uncomfortable neighbours. That their condition as a people has been improved by the coming of the white man, there can be no doubt. I will put out of consideration for a moment the peculiar benefits of Christianity which have not probably reached very many of them, and will speak only of the material advantages belonging to this world. The Zulu himself says of himself that he can now sleep with both eyes shut and both ears, whereas, under tribal rule, it was necessary that he should ever have one eye open and one ear ready for escape. He can earn wages if he pleases. He is fed regularly, whereas it was his former fate—as it is of all savages and wild beasts—to vacillate between famine and a gorge. He can occupy land and know it for his own, so that no chief shall take away his produce. If he have cattle he can own them in safety. He cannot be “smelt out” by the witchfinder and condemned, so that his wealth be confiscated. He is subjected no doubt to thralldom, but not to tyranny. To the savage subject there is nothing so terrible as the irresponsible power of a savage ruler. A Dingaan is the same as a Nero—a ruler whose heart becomes impregnated by power with a lust for blood. “No emperor before me,” said Nero, “has known what an emperor could do.” And so said Dingaan. Cetywayo would probably have said the same and done the same had he not been checked by English influences. The Zulu of Natal knows well what it is to have escaped from such tyranny.

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I liked the Zulu of the Natal capital very thoroughly. You have no cabs there, and once when in green ignorance I had myself carried from one end of the town to another in a vehicle I had to pay 10s. 6d. for the accommodation. But the Zulu, ornamented and graceful as he is, will carry your portmanteau on his head all the way for sixpence. Hitherto money has not become common in Natal as in British Kaffraria, and the Zulu is cheap. He will hold your horse for you for an hour, and not express a sense of injury if he gets nothing; but for a silver threepence he will grin at you with heartfelt gratitude. Copper, I believe, he will not take; but copper is so thoroughly despised in the Colony that no one dares to show it. At Maritzburg I found that I could always catch a Zulu at a moment's notice to do anything. At the hotel or the club or your friend's house you signify to some one that you want a boy, and the boy is there at once. If you desired him to go a journey of 200 miles, to the very boundary of the Colony, he would go instantly, and be not a whit surprised. He will travel 30 or 40 miles in the twenty-four hours for a shilling a day, and will assuredly do the business confided to him. Maritzburg is 55 miles

from Durban, and an acquaintance told me that he had sent down a very large wedding-cake by a boy in 24 hours. “But if he had eaten it?” I asked. “His chief would very soon have eaten him,” was the reply.

We cannot accompany Mr. Trollope in his somewhat lengthy story of Langelibalele, for it has been recently before the world in various forms, and our author formally declines to tell it ‘with any pretence of accuracy,’ or with any of the necessary competency of knowledge which should give value and decision to a printed statement. He is more certain about a source of wealth which the future may turn to account in the way of furthering the prosperity of the colony of Natal:

‘Before leaving the Colony of Natal I must say that at this Newcastle—as at other Newcastle—coal is to be found in abundance. I was taken down to the riverside where I could see it myself. There can be no doubt but that when the country is opened up coal will be one of its most valuable products. At present it is all but useless. It cannot be carried because the distances are so great and the roads so bad; and it cannot be worked because labour has not been organised.’

The Transvaal and its affairs may be left to the very recent memory of our readers; and its annexation offers aspects of imperial policy with which they need not be at present engaged. It would be more to our purpose to show, with Mr. Trollope, why we took possession of the Diamond Fields, or Griqualand West, and to estimate the wealth which has accrued to us from the acquisition. We content ourselves with a survey of the present position of the town and neighbourhood of Kimberley, the town to which the diamond-mines have given birth, and which Mr. Trollope regards as one of the most interesting places on the face of the earth, because it is there that the civilising of the savage by regular labour is being carried out with the most signal success.

'Of the national benefit arising from the diamonds there can be no doubt. Whether they have been equally beneficial to those who have searched for them and found them may be a matter of question.

What fortunes have been made in this pursuit no one can tell. If they have been great I have not heard of them. There can be no doubt that many have ruined themselves by fruitless labours, and that others who have suddenly enriched themselves have been unable to bear their prosperity with equanimity. The effect of a valuable diamond upon a digger who had been working perhaps a month for nothing was in the early days almost maddening. Now, as with gold in Australia, the pursuit has settled itself down to a fixed industry. Companies have been formed. Individuals are not suddenly enriched by the sudden finding of a stone. Dividends are divided monthly, and there is something approaching to a fixed rate of finding from this claim or from that, from this side of the mine or from the other. There is less of excitement and consequently less of evil. Men are no longer prone to the gambler's condition of mind which induces an individual to think that he—he specially—will win in opposition to all established odds and chances, and prompts him to anticipate his winning by lavish expenditure—to waste it when it does come by such puerile recourses as shoeing a horse with gold or drinking champagne out of a bucket. The searching for gold and diamonds has always had this danger attached to it—that the money when it has come has too frequently not been endeared to the finder by hard continuous work. It has been "easy come and easy gone." This to some degree is still the case. There is at Kimberley much more of gambling, much more of champagne, much more of the rowdy exhilaration coming from sudden money, than at older towns of the same or much greater population, or of the same or much greater wealth. But the trade of Kimberley is now a settled industry, and as such may be presumed to be beneficial to those who exercise it.'

Mr. Trollope humanely finds a great source of gratification in his oft-reiterated proposition that South Africa is a country of black men, and not of white men. 'It has been so, it is so, and it will continue to be so. In this respect it is altogether unlike Australia, unlike the Canadas, and unlike New Zealand. And as it is unlike them, so should it be to us a matter of much purer gratification than are those successful colonies.'

'In New Zealand we strove hard for this; but in New Zealand the middle of the next century will probably hear of the existence of some solitary last Maori. It may be that this was necessary. All the evidence we have seems to show that it was so. But it is hardly the less sad because it was necessary. In Australia we have been successful. We are clothed with its wools. Our coffers are filled with its gold. Our brothers and our children are living there in bounteous plenty. But during the century that we have been there we have caused the entire population of a whole continent to perish. It is impossible to think of such prosperity without a dash of suffering, without a pang of remorse.

In South Africa it is not so. The tribes which before our coming were wont to destroy themselves in civil wars have doubled their population since we have turned their assagais to ploughshares. Thousands, ten thousands of them, are working for wages. Even beyond the realms which we call our own we have stopped the cruelties of the chiefs and the no less fatal superstitions of the priests. The Kafir and the Zulu are free men, and understand altogether the privileges of their freedom. In one town of 18,000 inhabitants, 10,000 of them are now receiving 10s. a week each man, in addition to their diet. Here at any rate we have not come as a blighting poison to the races whom we have found in the country of our adoption. This, I think, ought to endear South Africa to us.'

Mr. Trollope does not boast that he has visited all South Africa; for the country is very large, so large as to be at present limitless, seeing that we do not as yet at all know our own boundaries. But he has visited the seat of government in each district, and, beyond the capitals, has seen enough of the life and ways of each of them to justify him in his trust that he may fairly be allowed the expression of an opinion upon their condition and prospects. Conceding to him a privilege which he has so well earned, we transcribe, by way of final quotation from his interesting volumes, what he has to say upon a question which is the most imperial of all in its interest both to ourselves and our fellow-subjects, present or prospective, in South Africa.

'The great question of the day in England as to the countries which I have just visited is that of Confederation. The Permissive Bill which was passed last Session—1877—entitles me to say that it is the opinion of the Government at home that such Confederation should be consummated in South Africa within the next three or four years. Then there arise two questions—whether it is practicable, and if practicable whether it is expedient. I myself with such weak voice as I possess have advocated Australian Confederation. I have greatly rejoiced at Canadian Confederation. My sympathies were in favour of West Indian Confederation. I left England hoping that I might advocate South African Confederation. But, alas, I have come to think it inexpedient, and if expedient, still impracticable. A Confederation of States implies some identity of interests. In any coming together of Colonies under one flag, one Colony must have an ascendancy. Population will give this, and wealth, and the position of the chosen capital. It clearly was so in Canada. In South Africa that preponderance would certainly be with the Cape Colony. I cannot conceive any capital to be possible other than Capetown. Then arises the question whether the other provinces of South Africa can improve their condition by identifying themselves with the Cape Colony. They who know Natal will, I think, agree with me that Natal will never consent to send ten legislators to a Congress at Capetown, where they would be wholly inefficient to prevent the carrying of measures agreeable to the Constitution of the Cape Colony, but adverse to its own theory of Government. I have described the franchise of the Cape Colony. I am well aware that Confederation would not compel one State to adopt the same franchise as another. But Natal will never willingly put herself into the same boat with a Colony in which the negro vote may in a few years become predominant over the white. In Natal there are 820,000 coloured people to 20,000 white. She might still exclude the coloured man from her own hustings

as she does now; but she will hardly allow her own poor ten members of a common Congress to be annihilated by the votes of members who may not improbably be returned by coloured persons, and who may not impossibly be coloured persons themselves.

With the Transvaal the Government at home may do as it pleases. At the present moment it is altogether at the disposal of the Crown. If the Cape Colony would consent to take it, the Transvaal can be annexed to-morrow without any ceremony of Confederation. The Cape Colony would in the first place probably desire to be secured from any repayment of the debts of the late Republic. This would not be Confederation, though in this way the Cape Colony, which will soon have swallowed up Griqualand West, would be enabled to walk round the Free State. But the Boers of the Transvaal would, if consulted, be as little inclined to submit themselves to the coloured political influence of the Cape as would the people of Natal. What should they do in a Parliament of which they do not understand the language? Therefore I think Confederation to be inexpedient.

But though the Cape Colony were to walk round the Free State so as to join the Transvaal—though it were even to walk on and reach the Eastern Sea by including Natal—still it would only have gone round the Free State, and not have absorbed it. I understand that Confederation without the Free State would not be thought sufficiently complete to answer the purpose of the Colonial Office at home. And as I think that the Free State will not confederate, . . . I think that Confederation is impracticable.

It is again the great question of coloured races—the question which must dominate all other questions in South Africa. Confederation of adjacent Colonies may be very good for white men who can rule themselves, and yet not suit the condition of territories in which coloured men have to be ruled under circumstances which may be essentially different in different States.'

SUBURBAN PEOPLE.

Wonderful as London is, perhaps its surrounding districts, called 'the suburbs,' which are ever growing more and more distant, are still more wonderful. They are the city's safety-valve for taking off into space, during the night-time, humanity which has existed through the day at high-pressure.

The life of suburban people is unique. Their habits and ways of looking at things are neither those of countryfolk nor of town-folk. We shall jot down a few notes concerning these dwellers in the suburbs, who are neither altogether of the city nor of the country.

What essentially *unmanly* places are the suburbs of London between nine o'clock in the morning and six o'clock in the evening! During these hours the gentlemen are all in town, and with the exception of the few solitary males on duty, such as the postman, the telegraph-boy, and the curate, women reign supreme. This arrangement pleases married ladies so much, that when their imagination soars very high, and they desire the pleasing excitement of picturing horrors, they exclaim to female friends who may visit them from the country, 'What should I do if my husband were at home about the house all day, as yours is? How can you endure it, my dear?' To unmarried ladies, however, this solitude is not so full of charms. Very dreary, indeed, are the faces worn by members of daughterful houses as they sit in the draw-

ing-room window waiting until the evening trains from the city shall return them their 'young men.' It would be a mistake to say that the ladies, in the absence of the gentlemen, spend their time in paying gossiping visits. Owing to the tyranny of cliques, their circle of acquaintance is too small for that. A 'set' seldom consists of more than three or four families, and when fairly enclosed in one of these social cages nothing can be done except to repeat the refrain of the melancholy starling, 'I can't get out, I can't get out!' So many are the social barriers isolating suburban people that, unless you have introductions before settling in a suburb, you may remain in solitude for years. People rather pride themselves on 'not knowing every one,' as they express it; were it not for the discoveries of children and servants, even those who are next-door neighbours would be as ignorant of each other as the snob is of the 'swells' he talks about. It is true that when water runs scarce people may get introduced by the use of a common pump; that much is learned through the one-brick-thick partition walls; that nodding acquaintances are formed after some years' attendance at the same church; nevertheless suburban people are separated from each other on many and strange principles of division. There is, for instance, no chemical affinity between those who keep two servants and those who have only one. Those who live in three-story houses cannot

be expected to recognise the owner of a two-story tenement as a man and a brother. There is generally a little coolness, justified by certain subtleties of social metaphysics, between him whose business relations in town are in soft goods and him who is in the hardware line. You are often made aware of the fact that there are traders and traders, if you hold false views as to the equality of all branches of respectable commerce. One great inconvenience arising from these cliques is that those who intend to marry have a very limited number of candidates to choose from. A young man spends his day in the city, and comes home in the evening to his suburban lodgings. If the vicar be an energetic visitor he may possibly have been discovered by him, and may, by his introduction, come to know one or two families; if not, that shyness which makes an Englishman think twice before trying to rescue a drowning person to whom he has not been introduced, may cause him to be without female friends of the better sort for years. Under these circumstances practical lovers have to see every quality they desire in three or four willing victims at most, rather than waste time sighing after blameless absent impossibles.

Considering how little suburban people know of each other, at least directly, it is no wonder that awkward pauses frequently occur in their conversation. Though every one is stiff, every one abuses 'this unsociable place,' and pathetically laments that the system of cliques should prevail. One of Swift's ironical arguments against abolishing Christianity was that 'the wits would have nothing on which they might divert their spleen;' and it certainly would be dreadful if suburban people had no churches and chapels round

which to centre their discontents, ideas, and ambition. Disestablish, in the sense of abolish, vicars and curates, and you will at once cause a conversational famine. After the weather has been fully discussed, what second question could suburban conversation possibly hit upon except the invariable one, 'What did you think of our vicar last Sunday? For my part, I liked the curate better.' Or, 'I don't at all think the vicar should allow such a young man to preach; he is much too plain in his remarks.' What a chance there is for the would-be plenipotentiaries of the neighbourhood to gain a little importance and publicity in the numerous offices connected with a church! Their names are emblazoned at the end of red letter advertisements concerning teas, bazaars, and harvest festivals. They are the observed of all observers as they hand the plate on Sunday, and fuss about whenever gas, summer-heat, and heavy sermons cause ladies to faint. On the whole, the suburbs could never get on without churches as centres, round which penny readings, choral societies, Christmas decorations, and, best of all, unmarried curates do congregate.

Next in importance to the clergy come suburban medical men—at least those of them who go their rounds in a one-horse pill-box carriage. After wondering for a long time why these gentlemen never walked, but always drove, even if they had only to go a few yards from home, we asked one of them for an explanation, and his reply was very candid. It was, 'By way of an advertisement. Besides,' he added, 'Mrs. Smith likes people to know that the doctor's carriage is at her door, because it enlists her neighbours' sympathies and brings to her gossip-laden visitors.' There

is a great amount of sameness about all the London suburbs. Hundreds of houses are to be seen in a row, with gardens in front, scarcely differing from each other by a single brick or flower. Behind every 'villa'—which, in suburban parlance, means simply house—there is the same long strip of brown grass partitioned off by oaken laths. The inside of all these houses seem to be furnished by one general order. Buckingham House has exactly the same sort of parlour and drawing-room as Elm Grove. The furniture and appointments of Fairfield do not mark any individuality distinguishing its inhabitants from those living in Carrisbrooke or Camille Villas. Certainly the brass plates on the 'seminaries' for young ladies and gentlemen somewhat differ; for whereas one calls itself a 'Collegiate Institute,' its neighbour and rival will be an 'Academy.' The intelligent foreigner, who sees at a distance a train full of city gentlemen returning from the railway station, must think that their dress and appointments are the regulation of a despotic government. It is said that in China, when your pocket is picked, it is impossible to follow up and detect the thief, because the faces and dress of all Chinamen are exactly alike. A similarity almost as great is to be seen in a company of city men as they return to their houses, each one swinging a hare or some other equally respectable piece of dinner material.

Though the servant question is a difficulty which presses on all parts of England, it seems to be most felt in the immediate neighbourhood of London. Town servants consider the suburbs too dull; and it is not always advisable, even when possible, to import ser-

vants from the country. Consequently there is an exceeding bitter cry heard throughout the suburbs, asking, 'Do you know of a servant?' A peculiar disease called 'want of servants' has attacked the brains of all mistresses. For this state of things mistresses have themselves in a great measure to blame, though it must be acknowledged they have often much to put up with. The fact is, good servants are spoiled by bad mistresses, and good mistresses by bad servants. We know a house where only one servant is kept, in which in a single year there were eighteen servants. Surely there was something wrong in all persons concerned.

It has been remarked that every circumstance in a person's life, even such an apparently insignificant consideration as the colour of the paper in the room in which he was born, influences and moulds his character. If this be so, the nature of suburban houses must greatly influence their inhabitants. We certainly do not expend more bad taste on our clothes than on our houses. What can compete in ugliness with the castle or tower-shaped villa made of red and yellow bricks, and surrounded by 'pleasure grounds,' through which there are walks bordered by crockery, and swept every half-hour to prevent the possibility of a fallen leaf suggesting Nature? Quicker than a child can build a house of cards does the speculative builder rear his villa. The board 'To be let for Building Purposes' gives place to its successor, 'Genteel Residence to be let or sold,' in less time than honest country people could conceive possible. Young love is very adventurous, and a lately married couple is soon found to build their nest in the half-finished house. It is true they will have

to complete it, at least in points of detail, at their own expense; and by reason of the damp they will find it necessary to make the acquaintance of certain functionaries such as medical and *undertaking* gentlemen; but what matter? All seems fair in the war which house-builders wage against society.

Every suburb contains at least three lending libraries. In these, for one penny you can get the reading of the uncleanest and most 'blood-and-thunder' three volume. Every day yearly subscribers turn in to taste 'the latest.' With diligence a lady afflicted with the sofa-disease can corrupt herself at the rate of three three-volume novels a day. The worst of it is, ladies order their comparatively pure nursery-maids to change these books when perambulating the children past the shops. Of course the most fleshly parts are devoured at street-corners; for crying children are scarcely as interesting as characters found in a highly-spiced novel.

For people who unfortunately suffer from impecuniosity there is great lack of public amusements in the suburbs. It is expensive and inconvenient to go up to town in the evenings, consequently there is no place to go to except parish concerts, missionary meetings, and penny lectures. Of course in summer picnics are attempted, being suggested in the first instance by the parish Sunday school's 'day in the country.' It requires very delicate tact to organise a suburban picnic. Mrs. Smith cannot be asked to meet Mrs. Brown. The four Miss A's have known nothing of the B's since that little jealousy about Mr. C. The D's are too rich to invite to meet the E's; they would feel insulted. Last time the F's

kept themselves to themselves, and went first class when all the rest of us were taken in a lot for half price in the third. These are the considerations that must be pondered over by the vicar's wife in sending out her invitations. Then, again, it is almost impossible to get such things *manned*, as all the gentlemen are in town. As a rule about ten ladies fall to the share of one lucky gentleman. When no social jar has occurred, what mirth and madness fill the heart of those who start on these expeditions! For an hour or two human nature triumphs over conventionality. We never could describe what we felt to be going on between those ten ladies who were taking care of that one gentleman in the long tunnel. Well, though marriages are made in heaven, why may they not be made in a tunnel too?

In spite of all that has been said, we would rather live in a London suburb than anywhere else. There you feel alive, for the beating of the great city's heart is audible. There you can babble of green fields, of cows being milked, and other country delights. And as to those who inhabit the suburbs, if we look on their little jealousies and vulgarities with infinite pity, we ought to feel infinite love also. Tolerance should suggest that in many and most things they are better than ourselves; that every creature is after his kind; and that if God bears with them, the most fastidious may well do so. Surely it is a note of a vulgar and small soul to be cynical and intolerant towards fellow-passengers, who under different forms feel the same joys and sorrows in the swift-sailing, but storm-tossed, ship called Life.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. V.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE poet crowned with honoured laureate bays

No fairer subject, sure, than this can choose.

Part has he sung in former tuneful lays;

'Tis fit the whole this month inspire his muse.

I.

A saw which modern joiners use

Sometimes, as did the ancient Jews.

II.

It comes from the sea, from the wide deep bay;

It goes over the hills and far away.

III.

Horrid sensation of utter prostration;

Tergiversation on all the creation;

Disinclination for argumentation;

Renewed sternutation with little cessation.

IV.

The lowing kine and sometimes wine

Are this, and ladies not too fine.

V.

He is hateful and sickens;

It is grateful and quickens.

VI.

Sad curse of those in every age and clime

Whose only labour is to kill the time.

VII.

Budge doctor from the porch, or is he, rather,

A fine, unfeeling, stern, old Roman father?

VIII.

We give his name, of strange financial fame,

To portrait darker than its ebon frame.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the May Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by April the 10th.

ANSWER TO No. IV. (TRIPLE ACROSTIC).

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | E | M | M | E | W | | |
| 2. | A | L | G | A | R | D | I |
| 3. | G | U | E | R | D | O | N |
| 4. | E | L | E | C | T | E | D |
| 5. | R | A | S | H | E | R | S |

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abacus, Abelard, Acephate, Aces, Acipenser, A Guernseyite, Alma, A. M. C. B. O., A. M. de B., Antagonist, Araba, Arno, 'Arry Repressed, Beatrice W., Blue-Peter, Bonbon, Bon Gualtier, Brief, Bristles, Bumpkin, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Castledine, Cat & Kittens, Cats & Co., Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Cui Bono, Dixie, Domino, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, Emeric, Etak, Excelsior Jack, F. B. H., General Buncombe, Gimlet-Eye, Gnat, Griselda, G. U. E., Hag, Half-and-Half, Hampton Courtier, Harrow Road West, Hazlewood, H. B., Hibernicus, Ignoramus, Incoherent, Jack, Jessica, John-o'-Gaunt, Kanitbeko, Kew, L. B., Leona, Lizzie, Manus O'Toole, Mignon, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo, Murra, Newell, Nil Desperandum, Nip, Non sine gloria, Nowhere, No. 2, Old Log, Pat, Patty Probity, Penton, Pockets, Pud, Puss, Racer, Roe, Roman, Rosa A., Shaitân, Sir Hans Sloane, Sir Patrick Felis, Smashjavelin, Spes, Tempus Fugit, The Borogones, The Mad Tea-party, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Thunder, Toby, Toto, Try, Tweedledum, Verulam, Weepplots, Welsh Rabbit, White Lancer, Winter Solstice, and Yours truly—109 correct, and 11 incorrect: 120 in all.

Alma, who last month sent the unsigned solution to No. III, is credited with a correct answer to that Acrostic.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Domino gave 'Hit' for light 6, and Little Mither gave 'Idyl,' 'Doubloon,' and 'Hit' for lights 8, 5, and 6 of No. III. These solvers were of course not credited with correct answers. If exact copies of the solutions forwarded were retained, much imagined wrong on the part of a few solvers, and inconvenience on the part of the Acrostic Editor, might be avoided.

Tweedledum's correction of light 8 of No. III. was received too late.

No other words than those given by the author for the lights of No. III. can be accepted. Various pleas forwarded by solvers have been considered, but having regard to the number who have answered the acrostic accurately in every particular, and to the excellence of the published answer, the proposed alternative solutions cannot be deemed correct. It is to be regretted that one solver, who is also a subscriber to *London Society* from its commencement, writes of discontinuing solving the acrostics, upon disagreeing with one of the lights of No. III. The Acrostic Editor trusts, however, despite this protest, that with restored good-humour his name will appear among the successful solvers of No. V.

Bumpkin is informed that the March Number of *London Society* was published on February 27th; he should therefore have received his copy long before the 5th of March.

LONDON SOCIETY.

MAY 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XI.

PLAY.

MORNING. Spring is not out of the air yet, and its keen freshness yields but slowly to the heat of the sun. *That* has been up since four o'clock. It is now eleven. Agricultural labourers are at dinner; school-children have got through the brunt of their daily lessons; Mr. Landon—Cressida, for the last week, has been staying at Monks' Orchard—has gone half his parish-rounds already.

The Monks' Orchard blinds are still drawn, and only the lower regions of the house show signs of stirring. No great wonder. The company sat out on the lawn last night well into the small hours, and only separated when the early blackbirds had begun to chirp.

Cressida wakes at last. 'Calling' is accounted barbarous at Monks' Orchard. He or she may choose their own time to rise. Coffee may be had for the ringing of the bell. Then, towards mid-day, everybody first meets in the dining-room, where they will find *déjeuner à la fourchette* awaiting them.

There is method in these ar-

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rangements. Elise maintains that English people can never be really sociable by daylight without a great effort. So, as hostess, with a large party staying under her roof, her rule is to curtail the morning and prolong the evening to the utmost; above all, to suppress the formidable rite of nine-o'clock breakfast; her belief that then, and then only, your guests will rise up and call you blessed.

'I shall be first, after all,' thinks Cressida, as she leaves her room, in a dainty, white, fluttering morning toilette, exquisitely appropriate, coquettishly simple, and with a mob-cap on her head.

Yes, the drawing-room is empty. She idles into the greenhouse, plucks a geranium or two for her dress, and then passes through the hall into the dining-room.

She is not the earliest bird, however. As she appears at the door, Lewis Lefroy steps in, by the window opposite, from the garden, and wishes her good-morning with a certain air of self-satisfaction.

'What! have you been out already?'

'I have been out since eight o'clock, sketching in the park,' he replies, proffering his portfolio as a testimony.

Cressida shakes her head at him gaily.

'Ah, yes, now I see distinctly the feeling, "What a good boy am I!" written all over your face. You know, people who have got up early are always so conceited in consequence that one cannot talk to them for the rest of the day.'

'What! you won't talk to me, then?' says Lefroy, with an air of mock displeasure, and adding, in a plaintive tone of hinted reproach, 'But you never do.'

'No; but I will look at your sketches, please, if I may,' says Cressida, stretching out her hand for the album, which he delivers into it obediently. It is true, he has not during his visit had much chance of improving his acquaintance with Barberine. There is metal more attractive for her, and Lefroy has had to admire her beauty and disapprove of her taste from a distance. But that he has not wasted his stay his portfolio bears witness. He stands beside Cressida, modestly identifying the sketches for her as she takes them one by one into her hand.

Meantime Alec has come in, and is leaning over the back of her chair.

'This is the Swiss lodge, taken from the road,' Lefroy runs on glibly. 'This is the circle of fir-trees on the heath. That is an attempt at a view of the house.'

'I know, I know,' said Cressida. 'And this is the old farm—charming! Here we have the group of chestnuts, and here—ah, the firmount and the Obelisk!'

She was passing on to another, when Lefroy interposed:

'I took some pains with that—not the most picturesque object in the world, but queer-looking where it stands, in the middle of the wood—and haunted, too, I hear. It looks very ghostly when you

come upon it suddenly in the dusk.'

'Uncommonly,' Alec let drop carelessly, with a smile. 'I raised a ghost there one night myself.'

'Did you? O, pray tell me how,' said Lefroy earnestly, with prompt interest. 'I am childishly fond of the occult sciences.'

'I really forget the exact incantation,' returned Alec deliberately. 'Miss Landon taught it me, I remember.'

Cressida, furious under her smile, goes on through the sketches, but conscious that Lefroy is watching Alec and herself, and struck with a suspicion that this little flutterer of an artist is not quite such a fool as he looks, or as innocent as he pretends to be. However, by this time other guests have begun to troop in, and the party presently sit down to breakfast.

Since the morning, ten days ago, when Mrs. de Saumarez' carriage came over to the parsonage and carried off Cressida unresistingly, to be Elise's helper in entertaining her guests, the girl's life has been one long stress of outer excitement and inner disappointment. She revels in the first, and courts it, to forget the last. Stephen Halliday has not come. Wild and improbable though it seemed that his arrival should help her, she had looked forward to it as to something that might snatch her out of a labyrinth from which she was becoming every day more powerless, perhaps more careless, to extricate herself. He was expected a week ago, but has kept putting off his coming from one day till another, till a dull conviction has seized and is gaining upon her that it is on purpose that he keeps away; that, so far from wishing to meet her just at present, he prefers that their paths should not cross.

It had been a random hope. It

is as good as gone now ; and, apart from it, she falls more and more under the dominion of that desperation of spirit, that longing for mad distraction. She is reckless what she says or does to 'make people talk.' So much is evident to all ; for Alec is there, ready and anxious to play up to her mood, able to play on it too ; and it is not without ample excuse that gossip couples their names together, with proper reprobation. Cressida knows, but cannot find it in her heart to mind that or anything. She is not going to marry Alec ; he has no contemplations of the sort. She is going to marry Norbert Alleyne. There is nobody to help her ; a little while, and it will be done. But, O, to forget it to-day or to-morrow ! (The last week, if she were to count, would be found to contain many hours of forgetfulness, it must be owned.)

There is a dance-to-night, a picnic the day after to-morrow, and next week a grand *fête* to which all the neighbourhood are asked. There is to be a garden-party and a supper, and dancing in a tent, and many London friends are here for the occasion. Surely, Cressida thought, Halliday—if he means to come—must show himself now. But he has been detained again, and his last letter leaves the whole matter of his advent so uncertain that she despairs of it altogether. She tries now to think it could not have helped her. There are moments when she seems to perceive that things have gone too far. Alec has it all his own way for this hour and the next and the next. He is not in the habit of looking on, either, though well aware that a variety of things most people set store by—honour, good faith, self-respect, the welfare of others, their own—are being dallied with as unscrupulously as possible ; this

lends enchantment to the race, and so far he has taken care not to inquire too curiously 'Whither ?'

Breakfast - luncheon protracts itself indefinitely, a sign that the party fraternise well. In the afternoon fresh guests arrive. Among them are Mrs. Alleyne, Jeanie, and Millie, who are to stay for two nights for the dance—the rehearsal for the grander affair looming in the distance—and the picnic. People wonder and conjecture whether Cressida will continue to 'carry on' with Alec de Saumarez, regardless, under the very eyes of her betrothed's unsuspecting mother and sisters.

They have not to wait long for their answer. Late in the afternoon it is discovered that there are several things wanted still from Lullington for the dance-to-night. The Chinese lanterns have not come, nor the crackers ; and the wrong flowers have been sent ; and Elise is in despair. Cressida, who understands these things, volunteers to go as commissioner, Alec to drive her into town in his phaeton, the carriage proper being out already. But they must not go unchaperoned ; so much is clear. Good Mrs. Alleyne, seeing only that her hostess is in a difficulty, and wishing to help her out, offers to accompany them. Lewis Le-froy is called upon to make a fourth ; and so the arrangement stands.

The phaeton is brought round at once. Alec's nonpareils are pawing the ground gracefully. Cressida stands by their heads, patting them and feeding them with sugar.

'I hope the horses are quiet,' ventures Mrs. Alleyne, looking at them askance. She was in a carriage accident once, and has been subject to peculiar nervous terrors ever since.

'So-so,' replied Alec coolly,

whispering aside to Cressida, 'For which of my sins is it that they've appointed your future mother-in-law for our chaperon this afternoon?'

Cressida laughed. Alec proceeded to offer Mrs. Alleyne the box-seat, which she declined, thinking the other more secure. Cressida sprang up lightly in front with the charioteer, Mrs. Alleyne and Lewis Lefroy mounted behind, and they drove off.

'Are you timid?' whispered Alec presently to his neighbour.

'I? Never—why, you ought to know!' returned Cressida indignantly.

'Promise me, then, that you won't be frightened or scream—'

'At what?'

'At any tricks that my horses or I may choose to play. I promise faithfully, on my side, that no harm shall happen to you or to anybody.'

'O, you won't scare me,' returned Cressida, wondering vaguely what was coming next.

'Fifty to one, then, that I get rid of our companions before we are half-way to Lullington!'

'Done!' said Cressida heedlessly.

Whereupon Alec began to flourish his whip a little, the horses to rear and to caper, and Mrs. Alleyne to scream faintly and remonstrate.

'They're only just a little fresh,' said Alec, glancing back carelessly; 'they start off at a touch. They bolted with my groom the other day—all from his using the whip too freely—and nearly smashed my trap for me.'

Mrs. Alleyne sighs uncomforted. Cressida barely stifles a laugh. As soon as they have left the park well behind, matters become serious. Alec teases the horses; they start off at a gallop; to all appearances he has

little or no control over them. Mrs. Alleyne has turned as white as a sheet; the phaeton is swayed violently to and fro, and she clings to the side, imploring to be let out.

Even little Lefroy is growing fidgety. He is not a coward, but has the instinct of self-preservation very strong. Only Cressida looks on unmoved, though more than suspecting that Alec's rash game with the skittish creatures is turning against himself; that it is as much as he can do to hold them in, and that woe to his cargo if at this juncture a cart or a wagon were to cross the road.

They turn a corner, shy suddenly; one wheel goes over a heap of stones, shaking the phaeton violently and nearly upsetting it. Then Alec with some difficulty brings them at last to a standstill, panting and quivering. But Mrs. Alleyne has had enough. Convinced that she has been in danger of life and limb, and that Alec has been drinking, though it be but the third hour of the day—so much is evident, that he cannot manage the horses—she insists on dismounting, never doubting in her panic that Cressida will follow her example immediately. The idea has never entered Cressida's head. Besides, her errands must be done, and there is no time to be lost.

Lefroy—half-irritated, half-amused, but not sorry to find himself on terra firma—has had to get down to assist the old lady, and politeness obliges him to offer to escort her home, as it is clear she will not reënter the carriage. Alec says, 'All right!' lifts his hat to them, and drives on in a hurry before Mrs. Alleyne has her wits well about her again, or has realised that she is safe and sound.

She recovered her head presently, but only to be seized with fresh terrors on Cressida's account. The girl will be upset to a certainty.

Lefroy, as they walk home, reassures her as best he can; by this time he has an inkling how the land lies.

The horses, directly the winding road has taken the conveyance out of sight, have quieted down in a wonderful manner, and trot along evenly. But Alec can hardly hold the reins for laughing. Cressida takes them out of his hands playfully, and tries to drive; he guides her.

'I really must compliment you on your nerve,' he said admiringly; 'I did not know you had that amount.'

'You know now,' said Cressida.

'Yes; I know now that you are not afraid to trust yourself to me; and *you* see that you can dare to, safely.'

He may say that, but is privately aware that it is his lucky star, rather than skill, that has brought him off with flying colours, and that he went near having to pay dearly for his senseless freak. Although he is an admirable whip, there was a moment when he did imperil his freight; it was an awful moment for him, and he knows Mrs. Alleyne's fears were not so groundless as he had pretended to think them. Cressida's coolness at that moment struck him now as something extraordinary. He laid it to an absolute *étouderie* of spirits evoked by his own behaviour, the truth being that she was in that unnatural state of mind when she did not care what became of her, and felt at the minute that if he did break their necks, it was no great matter.

They drive round the town, do

the commissions, and then return direct. Alec wanted to come back by another, longer way; but Cressida forbade this, and he yielded.

They have gone far enough, in all conscience. It will be all over Lullington to-morrow that they are in the habit of taking long drives *tête-à-tête*. That Miss Landon! 'Poor Norbert Alleyne!' Cressida hears it already. So many voices harrying her on to fresh vagaries.

Alec—he only can make her forget herself; his presence seems always to promise her something, something pleasant to her self-love; he knows the way to her sensitive fancy, and might fool her into thinking that fancy is everything. The earnestness of his fooling is catching. Nay, in some impossible fairyland—where thought and memory, and hope and pity, and noble unselfish inspirations did not exist—she might be content to stay and laugh out life with him as long as might be. Now, that is not quite an unknown land to Alec; he does not enter fully into its impossibility for others—Cressida, for instance.

They dine early, and then go to dress for the dance. Cressida, when about to choose her ornaments, pauses a moment before the glass. She has a bright colour to-night, her eyes shine like gems; she has the startling evanescent beauty of one in whom all the life has rushed to the surface; it plays on her lips, quickens her glance, and gives that varying hue to her cheek. Her dress is white, looped up fancifully with nasturtiums and delicate grasses. Now she has a set of chrysolite earrings and pendant that suit it exactly. Only they are Norbert's present, given her during the first few weeks of their engage-

ment—a fancy of hers he had taken some trouble to gratify—and it goes against her to wear them to-night. She tries on some others, but the effect is not half so good; then reverts wistfully to the chrysolite *parure*. Bah! it is only a sentiment she thinks, and squashes it, and puts on the pale-green diamonds accordingly.

When she is ready she goes into Mrs. Alleyne's room. The good woman is overwhelmed with remorse for her desertion and cowardice during the drive, lays the blame of everything on herself, and promises faithfully that all Lullington shall know exactly how it happened. Cressida listens in helpless silence. Presently enter Millie and Jeanie, badly dressed, as usual; but Jeanie has a colour, and only wants a little care and taste to make her look really well. Cressida, almost instinctively, begins to rearrange the girl's hair and dress for her; and the improvement worked is wonderful.

'You look so pretty to-night,' Cressida says, with a tone of ingenuous surprise not exactly flattering, and kissing her involuntarily.

But poor little Jeanie, who so seldom gets compliments, blushes with pleasure. She looks pretty to-night, because she is so happy. Lewis Lefroy engaged her this afternoon for the first dance, and Jeanie is not accustomed to the honour of being sought in advance. He did not mention that he had asked Cressida long beforehand, but she is promised for Number One to Alec.

Now Alec, though vain, was not dense, and there were touches in Cressida's manner that made him know himself on slippery ground. So far she played up to his hand famously, if only he could feel sure she would not re-

voke the next minute. It piqued him intensely, and incited him still further to the pursuit in which both—he from his serene rascality, she in her wilful blindness and desperation—were content to leave the stake to hazard.

Alec does not engage her again immediately, after the first dance, confident that she will reserve one or two for him; and when he applies later on he finds he has not miscalculated.

As they waltz on together, couples stand still to watch them; and really it is worth while. Everybody knows that Cressida is an adept. But so many women dance divinely; and it is no more than opera *figurantes* can do. It was Alec's happy knack of passing through these fast and furious evolutions that was really singular and worthy of remark. How was it that he never looked ridiculous, no more than a dashing skater or rider?

'Shall you give up all this when you are married?' he whispers, as they twirl on.

'Yes, I suppose so,' she whispers back dreamily.

'Then let us keep it up to-night—give me good measure, to make up for lost time to come.'

'As you please,' says Cressida; then presently, laughing, 'Give you excess of it, if you like, so that

"The appetite may sicken, and so die."

'Do,' he says; 'but you must take the chances, and they are that increase of appetite will grow by what it feeds upon.' For Alec, too, it seems, can quote Shakespeare for his purpose.

Elise, characteristically, has up to the present moment been mainly complacent and well amused. She has shrugged her shoulders occasionally at the wilful pair, but not deemed the case one for

her interference. But now that the state of things threatens to become rather disagreeable for her, and people are making remarks, she takes alarm. Appearances should never be quite forgotten. Besides she knows Alec. Does Cressida?

'Mouse, you should really be on your guard,' she contrives to whisper to her aside. 'Think a little of Mrs. Alleyne.'

As if Cressida had not seen all the dubious, inquisitive, impertinent glances cast, and acting upon her like little darts goading her forward.

'Is it my fault if Mr. de Saumarez knows how to dance?' she whispered back, with a half-laugh, and looking Elise in the face with a vacant and not reassuring expression.

Alec caught the words, which were not meant for his ear; they nettled him somewhat.

She has danced till she is out of breath, and on catching sight of herself in a mirror she exclaims in disapprobation at her paleness.

'The room is frantically hot,' observes Alec, and leads her out into the hall: they go walking up and down through the passages and suite of rooms adjoining. People still persist in staring at them in an aggravating way. They remark on it to each other, laugh, and pretend to wonder what they have done to deserve this flattering amount of notice.

'Happy thought! Come for a turn in the gallery,' suggests Alec at last. 'The pictures and things must look very queer by starlight. I know you like ghosts.'

A door at the end of a passage leads them direct to the wing formed by the oldest part of the house. The picture-gallery, which ran round two sides of it and had formed part of the ancient clois-

ters, has not yet been discovered and invaded by other dancers unacquainted with the topography of Monks' Orchard. The rooms above in this wing were chiefly servants', though on occasions like the present stray visitors had to be lodged there, the house being unusually full. The servants had not made up their minds whether the gallery would be required, and therefore whether to illuminate it or not, and adopted the half-measure of lighting it dimly. Thus the explorers find it, and quite deserted, as they walk up and down among the busts and statuettes, and the grim Kennedys on the walls look down on them with mute disapproval. But Cressida has come to this—that she thinks, if she cannot help flirting with Alec, the more silent the witnesses the better. Apparently it is not written in her face, 'I would as soon marry a mayfly as this man.'

Yet there are points about the mayfly that attract her irresistibly. Had Alec been a magician he could not have played his cards better those last few days. It was not that mere charm of demeanour, betokening fine perception of invisible things and which pervaded everything, from his manner of entering a room to his manner of letting her know he thought her adorable, that alone could have ever thus carried her away. It was the signal disregard of conventionalities, the conspicuous oblivion of everything and everybody for her sake, the intentness with which he had thrown himself, steeplechase fashion, into the chances of the moment. Ah, there was a gambling audacity about it to which some chord in her responded too readily. For the last three days she, too, has not cared to look on beyond the next throw of the die.

They hear the sound of wheels driving round to the front door.

'What! are they beginning to break up already?' said Cressida. 'Perhaps we had better go back.'

'Not yet, not yet,' returned Alec. 'Are you so very tired of me?'

'O no; only rather,' laughed Cressida.

'You mystify me more than any one I ever met,' he resumed. 'When we are in a crowd I cannot make you out, and I say to myself that I shall never understand you till we are alone. But then, when we are alone, you mystify me more deeply than ever.'

Cressida bent down her head with a smile. It was the prettiest little head in the world—face apart—so perfectly rounded, the lines so exquisite where it met the little neck, the soft curve of the cheek, the delicate shell-like ear—touches of loveliness past definition.

'Mysterious, I?' she said, lifting her eyebrows incredulously.

'Everything about you is a riddle.'

'For instance?'

'Your engagement.'

'O, if that puzzles you,' said Cressida, laughing, 'I wonder at nothing. Why, if ever there was a simple, plain, reasonable matter of fact, I should have thought it was that.'

'It seems so monstrous to me, that I cannot take it in,' said Alec earnestly. 'Am I really to believe that you care—'

'Did I ever tell you that?' interrupted Cressida, with light mockery. 'I am sure, no. Indeed, I think there is nothing I care for in particular.'

'And nobody?'

'Nobody. Why should I? Everything is so dull, so flat and humdrum and monotonous—peo-

ple too. Life is a kind of long doze.'

'If you find it so now, why, what *will* it be when you are Mrs. Norbert Alleyne?' insinuated Alec, in an undertone, but as if his exclamation was involuntary and addressed to himself.

Cressida shivered, but pretended not to hear, and repeated, 'A long doze.'

'Then I wonder,' said Alec, 'how you would feel towards one who should say or do anything to startle you out of it?'

'O, I should be thankful, I daresay,' she said, with a random laugh.

He was watching her intently. There was always something about her that held him in check and in doubt. No other girl could have thrown wild words at him so long with impunity.

'Do you know,' he began suddenly, 'that, before we were introduced, I entered into a solemn engagement not to make love to you?'

'No, really?' said Cressida provokingly. 'I am glad to know that. But, pray, why do you tell me so now?'

'Because I want you to release me from it.'

Sheshook her head and laughed.

He went on—'Only in order that I may enter into another.'

'Another?'

'Shall I say—to make love to you for ever?'

'Say anything!' returned Cressida recklessly. 'Why, have you not been very careful to hint to me first how you keep your promises! Let me see—for ever, was it?'

'Damn for ever!' thought Alec unceremoniously. He had embarked in a perilous venture. A day or two will decide how it shall terminate, and to this moment the chances for and against him still seemed to him even. Certainly

he spoke truth when he told Cressida she mystified him. At times the girl struck him as so wild, so utterly, crazily careless of anything but present amusement, withal so fascinated by himself, that he began to question whether, from him, *any* proposition, however graceless and anti-social, would shock or affront her; and that, if he were to ask her to turn her back on the world, and let him carry her off to 'some unsuspected isle in far-off seas'—well, she might be mad enough for that, or for anything. He was not entirely to blame for the thought, either. At others he was crossed by a counter-feeling, as if all the while she might be laughing at him. But to-night the first impression predominates.

'Let us go back now, shall we?' she said presently, with a faint movement towards the door.

'In five minutes,' he entreated.

'Five minutes, then,' she said.

'We won't quarrel for that; it isn't long.'

'Long enough to make and take a promise in,' said Alec. 'Come, let us sit here.'

'Here' was a recess in the gallery, where two chairs stood by an open window. There they lingered, a duet that lasted through more than one five minutes, Cressida parrying Alec's insinuating speeches with pretty mockery. They were far from giving her real pleasure; she was too unhappy for that; but her mind was in that disordered state when it has a sick appetite for morbid deleterious things, the thirst for them growing as they are administered.

She had played with him these last days as a snake-charmer plays with a snake, the idea that there *could* be risk of any sort in the sport lending it zest. He has let her go on, and she has grown careless, as players do. The snake

can exercise a cold fascination over some creatures, deaden their will to save themselves. Her feeling now is of one walking in a bad dream. The caressing follies, the exaggerated protests, that fall from his lips draw like wild and alluring repartees from hers. Is it jest or earnest? She cannot taste the difference to-night.

So here is Alec, assured he may say what he pleases, and saying it. It would sink her in his, in anyone's, estimation to know she could listen on quietly, half pleased, half curious. Yet she is not startled, does not feel angry or shocked or insulted, wonders a little vacantly apart at her own mad speeches, listens to them as if they were some one else's; but they come, encouraging Alec to draw what inference he pleases—that he is the snake and she the bird. Perhaps it is so.

He has said something—something that makes her look away from him with a blush and a half-smile. Her eyes shun his and stray out of the window. A star fell. Again Alec's voice is in her ear, charming it. She will respond, as before, to the echo.

Instead she turned back to him a face with the flush faded to paleness, the smile gone.

'What was that?' she whispered, rising hastily.

'What do you mean?' said Alec, with an involuntary start.

'There is some one crossing the gallery. I heard a step; I thought I saw a shadow,' in the same startled whisper.

'Nonsense—hush—you are nervous.'

He made her sit down again, and they listened.

But a foot-tread that had nothing in the least spiritual about it, nor attempted to disguise its passage, was distinctly heard receding down the gallery at right

angles to where they were sitting. They remained motionless till it was gone and a door shut. Then Cressida, with an odd laugh, rose, saying, in quite an altered voice,

'I do not know what I can have been thinking of. We must go back.'

Alec, still ruffled and bewildered by the untoward interruption and the change in Cressida's manner, tried to rally.

'That is the third time you have said so,' he reminded her, laughing.

'But I mean it,' she said, with a vacant look up at him; then pleaded persuasively, in desperation, and smiling mechanically, 'Come, you will let me have my own way.'

Alec let her. He, too, had lost his head for the minute, and could think of nothing to do but to heap mental curses on the interloper.

They returned to the drawing-room, where indefatigable couples were still interceding for a last waltz. Cressida would not dance any more, but went to sit by Mrs. de Saumarez. Alec kept aloof. Both were glad of the sobering interlude. Cressida felt witless and dreary. Putting up her hand to her cheek presently, she missed one of her earrings. It had fallen out; when, where, she could not say. She hastily took off the second; the floor could be searched for the other after the dance.

The waltz ended, the company took some time dispersing. The last carriage had just driven off, when, to the general surprise and Cressida's stupefaction, in walked Stephen Halliday.

He explained to Elise how he had been unavoidably detained in town, only now getting away with difficulty; how at the last moment a delay had caused him to lose his train, or he would have presented himself at a more sea-

sonable hour. He had arrived during the dance, and waited till the evening guests had departed before putting in his appearance.

Elise assured him he was welcome, early or late. Had he dined? No. This was made the pretext for a little supplementary supper, *sans cérémonie*, for the party remaining. Elise at the head of the table was in her glory, brilliantly conversational. Her neighbour did his duty like a man in good spirits, but rather on his guard. Cressida had turned silent as a statue. Alec, who had manoeuvred to have her sit next him, could not get a word out of her. She seemed impervious to all that was going on around, able only to take the mechanical part in it. Alec was floored. He went to bed that night furious with the eel-like uncertainty of women. Just when you think you can rely on them they twist out of your hand, tell you you know how to dance, and wish you good-morning, and it has all to be begun over again. Is any woman worth taking much trouble to win? was a question he had long ago decided in the negative. Had Cressida been one whit less attractive, his *empressement* might have failed; but from first to last there had been a bedevilling spirit in the present venture that had fairly turned his head. He supposed she had taken offence at last, with good reason, if not good right, seeing she had kept leading him on. He was ready, if it were necessary, in order to reinstate himself in her good graces, to pretend, to make out, that he had been misunderstood. Certainly he had played higher to-night than he often did.

Cressida had not taken offence—felt she had forfeited the right to that; but, at least, she understood Alec perfectly, had never been blindfolded for a moment,

and reserved to herself the right of despising him, which she did, from her soul.

She had, therefore, very slight compunction how to treat him, felt almost thankful it had come to this, if nothing less would rouse her to her former self. That horrible spell had been broken somehow. Good heavens, it was time! She reddened to think of the part she had been acting already.

Whoever had crossed that gallery just then had, unwittingly, done her good service. The instinct of self-respect had been shaken out of sleep. No fear of further derelictions on that score now. There was some one still for whose opinion she cared; she had come to doubt that till she had found herself face to face with him to-night; but the sense of it was like a returning flow of life to her flagging soul.

Stephen Halliday took himself to task rather sharply that night. It was his way.

He had contrived at last—though not without much trouble and inconvenience—to get free to come to Monks' Orchard. Why had he been so set upon it? What had he come for? What, except to gratify that recreant wish to meet Cressida Landon again before she was married—a chance he had never expected—and what was the sense of such a wish as that—what was his business with another man's preserves?

Since their encounter at Mr. Marriott's he had exerted himself not to think of her, or if he must think, only slightly, with disapproval. Egypt also had done its work of distraction whilst he was there. On the other hand, six months had considerably mitigated his feeling of reproach and contempt for her act. He perceived that he had judged hastily.

She might have heard he was gone. He felt far from implacable now, especially after meeting her again to-night. He had watched her during supper, and her strangely subdued manner and unnatural sadness in her face touched him inexpressibly. He could see she was miserable, liked her for it, and never doubted for why; he also sees that a day or two of this and he will be more in love with her than ever. Has he been hoping all along at the bottom of his heart that the engagement may yet be broken off? Is he ready to forgive her now for changing her mind, if it be in his favour? The thought so galled his pride, which was egregious, that it would have inclined him—but for the look of the thing—to withdraw from the scene, and return to London the next day.

But that also would be pure cowardice. So he decides on a line of conduct which shall be irreproachable. Honourable neutrality. He will not stir, or seek to influence her in any way. If his advice or opinion is asked, he will give it—that is another affair—but he will act as an outsider, not as supplanter, to Norbert Alleyne.

CHAPTER XII.

EARNEST.

CRESSIDA, whilst dressing the next morning, suddenly remembered her earring. Where and how could it have been mislaid? When, at the finish of her last dance with Alec, she had caught a glimpse of her face in the mirror, both drops were in their places she felt sure. It seemed to follow that it must have fallen out in the picture-gallery, and she went to search at once; but in vain. She hesitated about making inquiries;

for now she suspected that Alec—as was likely enough—had possessed himself of the trinket when it slipped off in the dark, and was keeping it to choose his own time for restoring it. She shrank from asking him or doing anything to remind him or herself of her late folly.

That was a day of rest. Monks' Orchard, only half awake after the dance, was quiescent and well-behaved. But Cressida's mind was at anything but a standstill. The blinding excitement was gone. It was in soberest earnest that she had flown on to a distinct conclusion. That night she told Elise that she meant to go home the next day after the picnic. Mrs. de Saumarez feigned surprise, for form's sake only. She was far from surmising what Cressida had determined on as her next move, but supposed the girl had become sensible that her flirtation with Alec had been carried rather beyond bounds, and with too callous a disregard of appearances, and wished to give no further open invitation to gossip, which could hardly fail to reach the Alleynes' ears, and might cause considerable annoyance.

So, after a few faint remonstrances, she acquiesced, observing that it *was* dull for Mr. Landon to be left thus to keep house by himself; but that if Cressida changed her mind she might still stay on after the picnic, and at all events she would come to the ball next week. Cressida said nothing. There would be no ball for her, that she knew; but her thoughts were monopolised by what was to come between. Norbert and she had been sundered for long, and at last he was to know it. She would have a good deal to bear on all sides, she foresaw; but that Halliday mentally would think her step right, she felt con-

vinced. The idea of his silent moral support was encouraging; she longed to let him know something, but there had been no chance of speaking to him alone all day.

With all her flightiness Cressida had the sensitive pride of a woman, and shrank instinctively from the notion or appearance of 'running after' any man. It is true men were apt to save her the trouble in the first instance, by 'running after' her; but it had come to that in her, that she would have suffered like a Spartan sooner than make the first approach, even now, when for her a good deal might depend on it. Halliday was in reality as anxious as herself for a *tête-à-tête*: but being less of an adept at petty drawing-room manoeuvres, and withal less regardless than Alec, he had failed to bring about what he wanted. The picnic, which would otherwise have had no sort of attraction for him, he had looked forward to and hailed when the day came as his best opportunity of getting some conversation with her apart.

As at the first moment he thought her altered, improved; it enhanced the old charm of her smiling loveliness to have it proved to him that she could be sober and serious, feel sorrow, if need be, as it should be felt. Ah, well might the matter occupying her mind leave no room there for self-consciousness and coquette's play at this grave and critical turning-point.

If only Alec would not affix himself so prominently as her cavalier. He knew better than to pester her with active attentions; but he kept by her side, and when he did speak, Cressida could perceive an assumption—as of a foregone mutual understanding—in his tone which made her

frantic; as she fancied that others (Stephen Halliday, namely) must perceive it too, though of course they would not know how she had led up to it. Halliday merely saw that De Saumarez' manner annoyed her. He was not one of Alec's merciful judges. Having always thought him detestable, he thought now that he ought to be kicked—if only for his bad taste in paying this kind of covert court to an engaged girl in the presence of her *fiancé's* family, duly represented to-day by the three sisters Millie, Jeanie, and Fan, all of whom were there for the picnic. Only there is no kicking one's host. But he was on the watch for an opportunity of snubbing Alec, and meant to take the first that occurred of doing so as Cressida's proxy, in a more pronounced way than the girl—hanging back from him though she evidently did—seemed able to manage on her own account.

For Cressida was secretly a little afraid of Alec, who, she felt, must naturally resent being treated by her so cavalierly; his advances discarded abruptly, it was not clear why. But already, as she surmised, he was beginning to look on Halliday (whose detestation he returned with good interest) with hostility, and a suspicion that his appearance on the scene had had a good deal to do with the girl's altered behaviour. Halliday that morning voted him a nuisance; and seeing no occasion for sparing his feelings, presently resorted to a very simple measure that suggested itself of upsetting that young gentleman's arrangements. The picnic was to come off in the woods. The party were gathered and starting—some to walk to the spot, the rest were to be driven by detachments in a pony-chaise. Alec had already

taken off the first, and was seen afar off down the road, returning for the second, that included Cressida.

'Won't you walk up with the others?' said Halliday significantly. He had purposely loitered behind when the rest started. 'We shall soon overtake them.'

Cressida looked up at him hesitatingly; saw that if she declined she would be misunderstood. If she goes, Alec will draw his own conclusions. She cast a dubious glance at the approaching chaise.

'He will be very angry,' she ventured laughingly.

'O, let him!' muttered Halliday; 'he's deserved it.'

But Cressida is living at present on the hope that others than Alec will not be dealt with according to their deserts.

However, she assents, and they start off rapidly on foot to overtake the walking party, who are already far ahead up the wood. For the moment Cressida, in her relief at having avoided the drive with Alec, talks and laughs quite gaily and unrestrainedly. Halliday, he hardly knows why, begins instantly to allude to his deferred arrival, detailing the circumstances that kept him forcibly in town. A shade crossed Cressida's face.

If he had come earlier!

'But the party here shows no signs of breaking up at present,' he observed; 'I suppose that will come after the ball.'

'I am not staying for the ball,' said Cressida quietly.

'Not?'

'I go home to-night.'

He seemed surprised, but looked inquiring; and she felt she might add something in explanation:

'I—could not keep it up—it is time I went. I am in no mood for such things. My mistake was

in thinking it was distraction I wanted.'

'Shall not I see you again?' he said.

'I shall not be so far,' said Cressida rather sadly; 'the personage is no distance, you know, from the park. But I am not coming to Monks' Orchard—not to the ball.'

There was a short pause; then Halliday said significantly,

'Once I thought that I should never see you again until you were married.'

Cressida burst out,

'You will never see me married to Norbert Alleyne!'

'What was it you said?' he asked sharply, hurriedly. Some impetus in him had sprung up, as it were, to meet her words and snatch them out of her mouth.

'I am going to break it off. It is not too late.'

Halliday forced himself to be silent. Had he the right to be glad of this—glad as he felt? At least he should let nothing of this elation appear.

'Mr. Halliday,' said Cressida, looking up and speaking with firmness and simplicity, 'is it not worse to keep your word—the word you ought never to have given—than to break it?'

'That is about the most difficult question it is possible to put. There is no answer. It depends.'

'I did wrong,' said Cressida, 'when I—yielded—I can never make amends for that. But I did not know—did not realise all that would—must come of it—to me.'

Never was Halliday so perplexed and tongue-tied. He is emphatically *not* for people marrying against their inclinations. But he feels that this matter touches him too nearly for him to trust his judgment. He loves this girl: is more minded to give

her foolish words out of his heart than good advice out of his head.

'You only can know for yourself what is right in this. It seems to me that now, at least, you can judge of it in all its bearings,' he said moderately.

But Cressida feels that *he* thinks her right, and this conviction will give her resolution to carry it through. Of what may come after to herself, this is no moment to think. She has perhaps no right to dream to-day of heart's desires fulfilled. But life with this man, that once she had tried to hold cheap, how differently would she view it now in its full significance, as a glimpse into a possible future of light where she would have grown stronger, nobler, purer in her aims, and he have learnt thus that his love was not so foolish as he was once pleased to think it, but thank God evermore that he did trust the dictates of his heart!

'There's De Saumarez,' he said presently, half laughing, as he thought of Alec's discomfiture. They were approaching the general rendezvous five minutes behind the rest of the party, and Alec had come loitering a few steps towards them out of the wood. 'What is the matter?' added Halliday, for Cressida had started as though she had put her foot on a snake. Alec's expression and hard-set smile were singular. How thankful she felt at that moment that she was going home! To mediate between those two was, even for her art, impossible.

Halliday considerably kept apart from her now, for which Cressida was sensibly grateful to him. There are only a few hours more for her of the task of amusing and seeming amused, and she will be at home, not bound to look gay and make small talk with

these pleasure-seekers, whose merriment has no meaning whatever for her to-day.

The picnic was protracted to a late hour, but she had arranged to be one of the first to leave. The carriage, which was to take back some young people to Lullington early, was to drop her at the Rectory. By five o'clock her ordeal ended.

As she wished her good-byes she missed Fan from the company. She was not sorry. All day long she had shunned speaking to the girl or looking her in the face. It was Alec who put her into the carriage, but Cressida was hardly conscious of it. What rang in her head was Halliday's furtive parting question to her, as they shook hands,

'May I call on you in a day or two, before I leave Monks' Orchard?'

'Yes, yes,' she replied, just audibly; 'but please leave it to the last, until you are going.'

Cressida gone, Halliday found the last hours uncommonly tedious. He was too preoccupied to enter into what was going on around him, and objected to remaining as an incubus in the midst of a festive group. At last he drew aside from the general circle, under the pretext of wishing to smoke a cigar.

On the whole, he was satisfied with his conduct. He reviewed the line he had taken, and pronounced it irreproachable. To advise the girl to marry against her will was out of the question. She might, after all, have been drawn into this engagement by her relations. The young fellow might have proved undeserving, or worse. He had never known the particulars; hoped soon to hear more from herself.

But he had acted, and would act, only as a friend, and a distant

one. Honour, delicacy of feeling, at least, forbade him to betray his *empressement*. He had thought he could trust himself, and had not fallen short of his good resolution. Every word spoken, and his manner of speaking it, had been guarded in the extreme; and Cressida's straightforward, unembarrassed air and tone satisfied him that he had succeeded.

In his anxiety to escape, if only for a few minutes, from the clatter of tongues, he had walked on before him fast and at random, taking no notice of whither. The paths in the wood were so winding and intricate, that nothing was easier than to lose yourself in a small circle, and presently he stopped for a moment, uncertain of the points of his compass. The voices were lost in the distance, and there seemed no clue. He was standing in a tolerably open part of the wood; but the fern stood high on all sides, and beneath him lay a little forest-glen, overgrown with ragwort and tall foxgloves, none of which landmarks he remembered. Still, he had not gone far, he reflected, and could scarcely fail by and by to come across some of the company, who had been scattering when he left them, and inclined to wander about in twos and threes.

He heard sounds in the glen before him, and, looking down, perceived a figure or figures—a detachment of the party, of course. On approaching, he was rather surprised to see a girl, quite alone, lying on the fern, her head buried in her hands, and pressing her face against the moss. A vague idea of an accident, a fall of some kind, seized him. He hastened forwards, looking down sharply, and saw indeed that she was sobbing violently. Something amiss of the sort there must be, and he exclaimed,

'Has anything happened? Are you hurt?'

She gave a great start—like a wild woodland animal surprised in its haunts, half scared, half defiant—as she lifted up her face, regardless of the fronds of moss and bits of fern sticking to her forehead and cheeks, and turned towards him with an angry gesture and expression, and he recognised one of the Alleynes—the girl they called Fan.'

He had barely noticed her before, except to derive a general impression of brusqueness and oddness from her appearance and manners. There was clearly no accident, and directly he had seen who it was he had somehow ceased to feel so much surprise or solicitude. It might be characteristic of so singular a young lady to run away from the others and be found sobbing in an uncontrollable manner in an out-of-the-way part of the wood. However, he did not see that he had committed such a wilful impertinence that she should look at him in that way, just as if *he* were in fault. She could not recover herself in a moment, he saw, and his first impulse was to move away; but he was so struck by the intense violence of the feeling—whatever it might be—that was agitating her, that he hesitated an instant and looked back involuntarily.

'I beg your pardon,' he said bluntly; 'I really thought you were hurt.'

She thrust back her hair from her forehead, the tears from her eyes; half rose, looking him full in the face, but without a trace of the self-conscious irritation of some one surprised in a secret chagrin, of which—or of giving way to it—she is ashamed; only, as before, indignant and violently reproachful.

She wanted to tell him she was

not hurt, that she wished he would go away, and made a grand effort; but her voice choked in speaking. More sobs came, and then a vehement suppressed exclamation,

'I could die, I am so unhappy, and people are so wicked!'

More perplexed than ever, Halliday rejoined finally,

'Can anybody—can I, at least, do anything for you?'

'*You!*' she exclaimed, with an emphasis and accent so expressive and so unflattering, that a glimmer of the truth dawned upon Halliday. Might it be the matter of her brother's engagement that this girl was taking thus to heart, laying the onus of the coming break upon him? The idea was accompanied by a tinge of compunction.

It had checked his well-meant anxiety to intrude on her further. He saw she hated his presence, and did not wait to be told so, but moved silently away. He felt really sorry for her; but for his own part in the affair he did not see how he could possibly have acted otherwise. He soon found the general party again; and in course of time Fan made her reappearance, looking rather bleak and morose; but her face bore no traces of tears, and she was past being embarrassed by Mr. Halliday's presence or observation, which, indeed, she hardly noticed. Hers was a state of mind in which the late little incident must appear as trivial indeed.

The picnic was breaking up. Conveyances of various kinds were waiting in the road to take off the Alleynes and other neighbours to their respective homes, and Elise and her guests to Monks' Orchard.

Halliday walked back leisurely through the park with Lefroy. They were the last to arrive. On entering the drawing-room, they found it in a state of some commotion, Elise holding in her hand

a letter that had been awaiting her on her return, and everybody talking very fast and very loud. The two gentlemen were greeted at once with the news :

'What do you think? Here's a pleasant announcement! Mr. Kennedy is dead!'

'Joe Kennedy dead!' ejaculated Lefroy, concerned. 'Dear, dear! Quite a young man. How very, very shocking!'

'No, no! If it had been him it would not have mattered, as he is not the landlord; but Tom—of course you did not know him, nobody did—he made a *mésalliance* with a baker's daughter, or something of that sort, and was out of society. A great scapegrace,' continued the chorus in unison.

'Well?' said Halliday stolidly, wondering to himself why they were all so disconcerted and distressed.

'Don't you see,' said Elise, smiling at his stupidity, 'the painful question that is occupying us is, *Can we have the ball?*'

It occupied everybody's mind that night, but already by the morning it was decided they could not. It would not be decorous. Joe, as Elise had observed, was nobody; but to Tom, as lord of the manor, certain regards were due. Further festivities must be postponed at once, and the next days were chiefly passed in taking the measures rendered necessary by the ill-timed catastrophe: sending notes in all directions, cancelling invitations, and countermanding orders, till Alec complained that his horses were being done to death by the work. For a week Tom Kennedy formed the topic of more conversation than had ever been wasted on that subject during his lifetime.

'He was a poor creature, wasn't he?'

'Yes,' replied Alec superciliously; 'a little weak in the upper story, they said.'

'They always say that,' remarked Halliday, 'of a man who does just as he likes. After all, what did this fellow do? Make a fool of himself in his marriage, and get into the hands of Jew money-lenders. A common story enough.'

'Ah, but,' said Alec languidly, 'I could tell you a thing or two more. To begin with: when he was a small boy and at school with me, he was sent away for pilfering. Fancy, from what his cousin told me, that he's spent all his life in going to the devil, keeping his wretched family on thorns lest he should do it in some disagreeable way, something that would make a noise, you know: embezzle, appropriate a signature, or blow out his brains, perhaps, when there was nothing else left for him to do.'

'What a mercy for them all that he died a natural death first!' ejaculated Lefroy; and the others assented in silence.

Such was poor Tom Kennedy's epilogue, a verdict that nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it, carried *nem. con.*

The three gentlemen were sitting up in the smoking-room. Lefroy and Halliday were now the only remaining male guests at Monks' Orchard. It was the latter's last evening, and the night on which the ball should have been. Before leaving on the following afternoon he intended to pay his promised call at the parsonage, which in accordance with her hint he had deferred till now. It was only out of deference to Elise and appearances that he had stayed so long. He had at all times a great objection to Alec, and the last three days had seen it start into ominous proportions. Hither-

to, however averse to fraternising, the two men had kept—kept politely—at a distance from each other; Alec being indifferent, Halliday feeling too estranged from a thing of Alec's feather to condescend even to regard him as an enemy. But the longer he stayed now, the more their relations threatened to become close, active, aggressive. Alec owes him a score he will not leave unsettled, if he can help it. Forbearance was never Halliday's strong point. There was gunpowder about. No explosion had yet occurred; but only a spark was wanting.

'There are no children living,' added Lefroy; 'so it's this cousin you speak of who takes the property, isn't it? Joe Kennedy—I remember him; a good fellow.'

'A very good fellow,' echo the others simultaneously.

All three know Joe very slightly. None have much in common with him; but Joe's good qualities are the sort that command instant, undisputed acknowledgment everywhere, from men, women, and children alike, ay, and horses and dogs as well. We doff to them, as to the National Anthem.

'Married is he? I forget,' inquires Halliday by and by, carelessly, just to keep the conversation alive.

'No; he's always lived a nomad sort of life, I understand, in all sorts of outlandish places.'

'Yes,' Lefroy chimed in; 'one day you hear of him in California, the next in the Caucasus, then one fine morning he turns up in London or Lullington. One must be a bachelor for that.'

Alec laughed. He was looking dangerous.

'Yet the story goes—I don't vouch for its truth, you know—that he was more than half caught down here about a couple of years

ago;' he paused, gave a few gentle whiffs, and then concluded, 'But he thought better of it in time, cried off at last before he'd burnt his fingers.'

Halliday leant back in his chair, and took his cigar out of his mouth, that his face might more fully express how bored and how contemptuous he felt at Alec's witticisms.

Lewis Lefroy, less alert than his wont, ignorant as Halliday of what he was alluding to, and possessed with an unfortunate curiosity to know more, rejoined quickly,

'Whom do you mean? I never heard about it.'

'Not?' said Alec provokingly.

'Why, man, the same quarter where your unhappy friend—Alleyne, Boleyn, or whatever the name is—a very young stager, I imagine, didn't contrive to get off so scot-free.' He broke off, looked affectionately at his cigar, and then wound up contemplatively and with emphasis, 'Jilted—poor devil!'

For the report that Miss London's engagement is 'off' has to-day found its way to Monks' Orchard. Some one has breathed it to the Lullington reeds, and the tale is abroad, though only as an *on dit*.

Lefroy knew as well as anybody that the subject they were getting on was precarious. But, alas, it was the one uppermost in all their three minds; and he, possessed by the fatality haunting the topics we ought to avoid, could not keep off it.

'Can it be true, do you think?' he said doubtfully.

'Why not?' said Halliday dryly.

Alec laughed. You cannot thrash a man for laughing only, yet there are laughs that deserve such condign punishment. Hal-

liday's temper was rapidly going, and with it his cooler judgment and discretion. He felt a latent insolence in Alec's manner that made him savage.

'Exactly. Why not?' echoed Alec provokingly. 'The fellow had a lot of money, or she'd never have thought of him, of course; but, so far as I've seen, no girl has it in her to put her hand to a wise speculation of that sort and carry it through without looking back, you know.'

'You mean,' said Halliday, irritated, 'that she may be weak enough to take a foolish step and have to acknowledge it afterwards? Most of us have done that, and more than once.'

'I mean what I say,' said Alec, with the exasperating amiability of a man perfectly sure of his position; 'but pray don't suppose I want to blame her for throwing him over.' And he smiled covertly, adding carelessly, 'I told her she would have to do it.'

'You!'

Halliday let an amount of depreciation into his tone which was only less insulting than a blow. Indeed, his contempt for De Saumarez as an effeminate puppy was mixed with more animus than is strictly consistent with contempt.

'Yes,' said Alec idly, as incensed as his antagonist, and exulting in his power to annihilate him; 'we talked it over—she and I, you know. I, for one, had laid a bet that I would put out that schoolboy's light,' he said, with a deliberate, vaunting affectation put on expressly to exasperate the other, and concluded—breaking out into a perfectly natural laugh—'but, upon my soul, I had no thought the winning of it would have been quite so easy a task.'

Lefroy was struck dumb. The spark had fallen, and he had struck it.

'What?' said Halliday, controlling himself with an effort. He thought now that Alec must be mad or drunk, and fancied he despised him and his talk accordingly, but could not refrain from speaking as tauntingly as possible. 'Are we to believe next that Miss Landon chooses you for her confidant and adviser?'

'I don't care a damn what any one believes,' returned Alec; 'nor am I quite such a simpleton as to flatter myself—as some may do—that such a girl keeps her smiles for me alone. So I really shall not complain who gets their share, so long as I get mine—full measure, you know.'

'If I were you, and couldn't open my lips about a girl without letting out some dastardly insult or other, I should hold my tongue!' retorted Halliday instantly, whilst little Lefroy shrank aghast. It was the first time he had seen two men look as if they longed to fly at each other's throats.

But Alec laughed aloud,

'Halliday coming down as Don Quixote! Ha, ha!—this is good!—this is something new! I really beg your pardon for laughing; it is more than I can stand. Doing champion for the girl of the period! But, upon my word,' he added gravely, 'I think you'll have your hands more than full, considering the particular direction you've chosen; and I fancy that if our little friend at the parsonage yonder could have heard you, she would laugh the loudest of all. At any rate, I flatter myself that she and I understand each other.'

Halliday was up on his feet. The expression on his face was such that Lewis Lefroy, in real alarm, was roused to action. They will not cut each other's throats certainly; but the next moment Alec will have a flat affront flung

in his face, a polite hint that he is intoxicated—an impolite one, that he has lied. Lefroy stepped in, literally and figuratively, between the pair (and O, it was gratifying to him to have thus to interfere between two big men!).

'I think the lady would not thank us for dragging her name into conversation in this way. There, at least, you will both agree. The report we heard this morning is not confirmed yet. In the mean time you must let me remind you of what you seem to have forgotten, that Mr. Norbert Alleyne is an intimate friend of mine.'

Halliday checked the explosion, and flung himself back in his chair violently. Alec, with a look of lofty disgust, rose majestically and left the room.

'Why, but what a cursed idiot the fellow is!' exclaimed Halliday, in a tone half surprise, half explanation for having lost his temper so completely. He kept his strong language for strong occasions; and thus, with him, it still carried some emphasis to others and afforded some relief to himself.

'Yes, yes; I know,' said Lefroy soothingly; 'but then,' he added mysteriously, 'there *was* something in what he said, too.'

'What on earth do you mean?' said Halliday, eyeing Lefroy with that kindly toleration mastiffs show to teasing terriers.

Lefroy was self-content enough to accept it without the slightest resentment.

'Some foundation for those impertinent-sounding insinuations of his.' Then, as Halliday looked very black, he continued confidentially, 'De Saumarez is an awful scoundrel, I know, and impudent besides; still, not quite such a cad as to take that tone in speaking, unless he had some excuse—something to stand upon. I saw

you were put out, and was afraid you were going to follow with something—savage—which he richly deserved for his unconscionable impudence, but which would merely goad him into saying worse. I saw you didn't know.'

'Know what?' roared Halliday, losing all patience, and saying to himself that this man was nearly as bad as the other.

'Only that it has been a pretty serious affair between him and Miss Landon. Now every one knows what De Saumarez is,' said Lefroy, in a tone of ineffable general reprobation—'not the sort of man it's well for a young girl's name to get associated with. Miss Landon knows that, best of all. Yet the stories that have gone about—the lengths to which she has carried that flirtation—even I must admit it is rather strong. One might, any day, have expected to hear of a runaway match, only one knows besides that De Saumarez is such a slippery fish, and has gone through this kind of thing before with so many others. What he and Miss Landon mean by it is no business of mine; but if they have become the talk of the place, I can assure you it was their own doing. All this was before you came, you know.'

The story of the drive followed with a few irresistible embellishments. Lewis Lefroy had a talent for narrative. Halliday listened morosely.

'Infernal Lullington gossip,' was his mental comment.

'O, I've heard incredible things,' continued Lefroy, warming with his subject; 'that they go walking together all over the park by moonlight.'

Here Halliday laughed aloud, and rather fiercely.

'What!' he said; 'you swallow all these cock-and-bull stories then for gospel?'

'O, as I said, they don't concern myself, and I believe nothing but what I see,' said Lefroy airily. 'It was a child at the lodge who saw them come out of the wood, I believe.' He was inclined to be specially severe on Cressida, of whom he was somewhat enamoured, and to put the worst construction on Alec's behaviour, from a secret envy of the favours bestowed on him. 'But I saw enough to make me sorry and uneasy for my friend's sake. For instance, the night of the dance—if you had come earlier you might have judged for yourself—their obstinate flirtation was the talk of the room, and really something of a shame, considering she was engaged to another man. When I watched his attentions, and her way of receiving them—saw them go to sit out dance after dance together in the picture-gallery—I feared there could be, but one end, so far as Norbert Alleyne was concerned. How he will take it, I don't know; but the worst after all would have been if he had married her.'

He paused thoughtfully. Halliday made no sign.

'If it had been any other man but De Saumarez,' concluded Lefroy mournfully, 'it would not have been so bad. But his recklessness is notorious. He has no character to lose in the matter; but what can one think of a girl who seems, as he said just now, to be so thoroughly *en rapport* with him?'

Halliday scarcely heard this last speech, or those that followed upon it. An ugly light had flashed into his eyes—mockery burned in his ears and deafened them.

He had been a blind fool!

Lefroy soon got tired of talking to himself. His companion had turned suddenly silent and monosyllabic. They separated and went

off to their rooms, Lefroy congratulating himself that things might have been worse but for his judicious interference, and that Elise might thank him that her house had not witnessed a disagreeable scene.

Halliday was lodged in the old wing of the building. He went there to-night by way of the picture-gallery. When he got to his apartment he felt in his waistcoat pocket, found and took out something that had lain there for days—something that had slipped his memory completely, together with an incident which he now recalled with fatal distinctness.

It was on the night of his arrival, whilst waiting for the party to break up before presenting himself, beguiling the time by exploring the old wing, the picture-gallery, deserted he thought at first when he found himself there till he caught on a sudden the sound of low voices, and at the same moment a distant glimpse of the couple—De Saumarez discoursing in an earnest and seemingly irresistible manner to—well, the lady's back was turned, her figure lost in the shadow, and Halliday had seen only a white dress. Before he could bethink himself, his ear had been struck by a few phrases interchanged, which made him as undesirous to hear more as the talkers could feel to be overheard, and he beat a retreat with the lordly contempt with which we behold such tender scenes apart.

Then the same night after supper, when recrossing the gallery on his way to his room, he had noticed a shining object on the floor by the window in the recess, and picked it up—a little eardrop, chrysolites and gold—the property, no doubt, of Alec's *chère amie*. He had pocketed it with the intent to hand it over discreetly

to Elise the next morning. Never at that instant had it occurred to him as possible to connect the incident with Cressida.

And the next morning, when it came, had found his head so full of other engrossing thoughts that the matter had passed out of his mind, to be suddenly and rudely brought back by Lefroy's tittle-tattle to-night.

A new key to Cressida's curious manner that first evening, to Alec's on the following day, and her evident embarrassment as to how to meet it.

So much for the girl who had all but fooled him into excusing away her behaviour to himself in the past and to her betrothed in the present. Once more Halliday is confronted with his old, his first opinion of her when they met at Almenwald, a judgment on which he is now thrust back perforce, as of as pretty a piece of worthlessness as ever decoyed a sane man's head off his shoulders.

Where could his have been when he had persuaded himself that the girl had a serious, sterling, true, and faithful side, which was his to command if he chose!—a girl who, even then, had just come from profaning truth, faith, and everything a life worth living rests upon, by a despicable travesty of love with a despicable man.

Stephen Halliday was not there to judge her conduct by ordinary lights and pronounce opinion accordingly. The question for him was not how far this or that is consistent with rules of propriety, how far excusable, or ladylike, or condonable in good society. But he will be master of his own relation to her. That had been in suspense awhile,—she stood acquitted in his heart—sentence deferred. It went forth in him now, unequivocal, severe as the pain that inspired it.

“Sorrow seize me if ever that light be my guiding star!”

(To be continued.)

A PEEP INTO THE INNER LIFE OF AN IRONCLAD.

LAST autumn my old schoolfellow and friend W., meeting me at Ryde, where I was spending my holiday, and telling me he was the commander of the —, an ironclad at Portsmouth, asked me if I would like to take a passage round to Plymouth, to which place they were going in a few days, and we then could have a good chat over old days. As in the twenty years that had elapsed since we were at school together we had only met some three or four times and written but as many letters, I accepted the invitation gladly; and seeing the — at Spithead the next day, took a wherry and went off to her to ask the time of starting, &c. I found W. almost unable to speak to me—they were getting in powder and shell. The port admiral was to inspect the ship at half-past nine the next morning; when he left, some supernumeraries were to be received for passage, and they were to sail at half-past five in the evening. 'Bring your evening clothes and sleeping-gear, and be on board by five o'clock to-morrow afternoon, old fellow,' was all I could get out of W. So after looking at the large powder-boxes and heavy projectiles that were coming on board and being put down in the internals of the ship—all going on quietly, silently, and regularly, the place for each being evidently well known—I left somewhat impressed with the idea that a man-of-war was not a place all mirth and jollity, as certain pictures I had seen in

childhood always conveyed to me; but on the contrary a place in which there was a good deal to be done, and what was done must be done steadily, and one might almost say sternly. I found myself thinking of this all the way back to Ryde, and it made me look forward to my trip with some interest.

The next day found me with a small portmanteau alongside at five o'clock. W. met me at the gangway, took me down to his cabin, and calling his servant, told him to look after me, putting my traps in Dr. F.'s cabin, the doctor being on leave. We then had a cigar together, as it was what W. called the men's supper-hour. Just as we had finished our cigars a rap came at the cabin-door, and a voice, evidently that of a boy, said, 'Ship's company have had their time to supper, sir.' 'Out pipes, and pipe the sweepers,' said W.; the answer being, 'Ay, ay, sir.' And W. then told me he must report to the captain that all was ready, and must leave me to my own devices; that when they were at work I might stay on deck, but was not to speak to any one. So on deck I went, whither W. presently followed me. As he stepped there, saying, 'Turn the hands up; shorten in cable,' a boatswain's mate, who had been watching for him, instantly whistled, 'Twee-twee!' which I heard repeated about the ship; and then a prolonged whistle from various places, and some half a dozen hoarse voices shouted, 'All hands!'

‘Hands shorten in cable!’ The ship became instantly all commotion, men coming up the ladders. A set of men fell in on one side of the upper deck, and the rest went to the capstan forward. The captain came on deck, and I heard W. ask him if the galley might be hoisted up. ‘Yes, go on.’ ‘Call the galleys away to hook on. Sail loosers, up galley. Heave round.’ The first two orders were repeated by the boatswain’s mates, and for the last a lot of whistling took place. I saw a boat being hooked on to her tackles; the men on the quarter-deck came aft, hoisted her up, and then fell in again; and at the same time I heard some of the band playing forward, and saw the capstan going round. Officers were standing about in various places, taking notice of and attending to the work going on close to them. Not a word was said. The captain was quite silent; W. being the only one who spoke at all, and he said very little, but seemed to be watching everything.

I went down to where the chain cable was coming in, and there found one of the lieutenants and a party of men watching the cable as it came in and went to the capstan, going round some rollers and to its locker, some men below seeing it put properly there; a hose was playing on it outside the ship, to wash the mud off that was brought up. Going up to the forecastle, I saw a man with flags, which he changed every now and then. These I found out indicated to the captain what cable was out, the cable being divided into lengths of twelve and a half fathoms each. As the shackles that joined each length came in their number was hoisted. Seeing No. 4 flag come down and No. 3 hoisted,

I went aft to where the captain was, and shortly after heard the signal sub-lieutenant say to him, ‘Second shackle coming in, sir;’ and heard him say, ‘Stand by, below;’ at which a midshipman by the telegraph to the engine-room turned a handle which rang a bell, and was answered from below. The signal sub-lieutenant then said, ‘Shall we ask permission to part company, sir?’ ‘Yes.’ Up went four little flags in balls to the main trunk, a jerk was given them when they reached their place, and they flew out distinctly. Glasses were kept on the flagship in the harbour. ‘Affirmed, sir,’ was reported, and down came the flags; leave having been by this process accorded to the — to proceed in the execution of orders given. In a minute was reported to the captain, ‘Up and down, sir;’ and then, ‘The anchor is aweigh, sir;’ and at this the order was given, ‘Easy ahead; turn her to port, Captain H.’ ‘Ay, ay, sir,’ said the staff-commander, who attended to the steering; and making a sign to the man at the wheel, I saw the wheel go round from right to left, and felt at the same time the engines moving, seeing the ship turn slowly to the left. In a minute or two came from forward, ‘Heaving in sight, sir; clear anchor;’ to which W. held up his hand, in token of hearing; then a lot of piping that commenced forward, at which the band ceased playing, and the capstan stopped, and the men who were on the quarter-deck fell out and picked up a big rope. I saw something going on forward, and heard W. say, ‘Man the cat;’ at which the capstan was left, the men from it going to the big rope that led right round the deck. They stayed quiet a couple of minutes or so, and then I heard a

running out of the chain; when quiet the order given, 'Away with the cat.' The band played again, and the men went round the deck with the big rope in their hands at a fast double run; the lieutenant forward held up his flag—a white one—W. held up his hand, every boatswain's mate whistled, and the men stopped, paused, and let go the rope, which was belayed in the gangway. Then came, 'Man the fish.' A rope the opposite side of the deck was picked up, and after some little delay I saw the flag held up again forward by the lieutenant. W. said, 'Away with the fish.' The same run took place; the flag up again; the whistling, stoppage, and the rope was belayed. Then came, 'Man the up and down;' and the men picking up another rope walked a few yards, and when the whistle went let it go again. I could see then there was nothing much to be done. Something was still going on forward to complete this 'catting and fishing of the anchor;' but the anchor was up and in its place at the bows ready for letting go again.

As soon as the fish started, the ship's head being pointed for the Nab Light, the order was given to go on full speed; and the chief engineer being sent for, I heard him told to go forty revolutions, and to condense, that is, to turn sea-water into fresh, for the use of the ship, the forty revolutions giving the speed it was intended to keep. We were now gliding majestically past the Spithead forts, and out to the eastward, changing our course, as necessary, to pass the Warner and Nab Light-ships. When all appeared finished, I heard W. ask the captain if he wanted anything done. 'No.' Then came the order 'Clean arms,' at which the bugle

sounded, and bluejackets and marines, getting their rifles and swords, commenced to clean them about the decks. This lasted for some ten minutes, when I saw a marine speak to one of the midshipmen on deck, and the boy immediately go to W. and say, 'Had their time to clean arms, sir.' W. went to the captain and reported, 'Ready for quarters, sir;' the captain bowed, and W. ordered 'Sound to quarters.' The bugle sounded. Belts were put on, and the men fell in with their rifles. I noticed them in small parties; the marines, who were all one side of the quarter-deck, had no belts on. Their rifles were inspected by the captain of Marine Artillery and his subaltern, who belonged to the Marine Light Infantry. Such a fine body of men—big, broad-shouldered, deep-chested *men*! I say *men*, because there was nothing of the lad element so painfully prominent in line regiments; they were all bearded bronzed men—not, perhaps, so well set up as some men one sees in regiments, but looking thoroughly fit and ready for work—workmanlike is the term I should apply to them. The other side of the quarter-deck stood a party of seamen in two ranks. The way they went through the inspection exercise struck me much; no soldiers could have been more precise. Their rifles looked well kept, but their belts, which were of leather, looked dirty and shabby. On the gangway stood a party armed with swords, or, I suppose, cutlasses only, and further forward I saw some men with no arms at all. In the battery below there were more bluejackets—those with rifles together, and those with swords together. To each party there was a lieutenant, attended by some juniors, inspecting the

men. The inspections over, each officer sent the men away to return their arms; when they came back the guns were secured for sea. The heavy guns came in with the winches, were elevated so that their muzzles caught, and then held by chains. As each lieutenant had finished, I saw him report to W., who at the end reported, 'All present and the guns secure,' to the captain.

All this did not take long, perhaps twenty minutes; but we were now outside the Nab, and keeping away round the Isle of Wight. The staff-commander had been attending to the steering; men were heaving the lead and calling the depth of water; a look-out man, as soon as the anchor left the ground, had gone to the masthead; the signal sub-lieutenant, a midshipman, and some four signalmen had been looking about everywhere; and seemingly keeping them all on the *qui vive* was Captain E., as he walked about watching everything, speaking to nobody, now and then looking at the compass and at the chart, which was in a little house or room on the bridge. W. had ordered 'Disperse,' which had been duly sounded by the bugler, and the men were standing about in knots. I then heard Captain E. say, 'Captain W., make sail—plain sail; but keep fast the mainsail.' Then W. began, 'Main and mizen topmen of the watch, uncover their sails.' Some men went aloft, and the main and mizen topsails had their covers, which keep the sails clean when steaming, taken off. As soon as it was done, 'Hands make sail,' everybody came up, and a couple of midshipmen instantly went into each top; the officers went to their stations, small flags appeared—the first lieutenant forward with a white one, the lieu-

tenant who was at the mizen-mast a blue, and a boatswain's mate on the gangway a red. The bugler took a position so as to see Captain E. and W., evidently having both on his mind. 'Upper yardmen in the tops!' The whistles went, and a small body of men ran up the rigging of each mast into the tops. I thought I saw Captain E. look annoyed at something, and then he whispered to W., who said, 'Pipe down from aloft.' A great deal of whistling, and all the men came down. 'Talking in the fore rigging as the men went aloft,' said W. Then came again, 'Upper yardmen, men in the tops!' and away went the men once more. A couple of minutes were given them to rest in the tops, during which time, at a nod from Captain E., the bugler sounded 'Attention;' at which there was a deathlike stillness for a few seconds, during which W. said, 'Quietness at the main bitta.' The bugle sounded again. Then came, 'Away aloft!' The men who had been clinging with their heads under cover sprang in the rigging; the men in the tops went higher. 'Trice up, lie out!' and every yard received its quota of men. I noticed that each yard had the men almost mathematically placed; but found it came so, but was not arranged. As the sails on each mast were ready, the little flags I have mentioned were held up, the blue first, then the white, then the red. W. looked very impatiently for the red. 'Haul taut, let fa-all, sheet home!' came in a breath; the sails appeared from lower and topsail yards, and the men on deck tore away with the ropes they held in their hands, being stopped by a jerk. 'Topsail halyards!' Flags again appeared. 'Attend the braces, hoist the topsails!' With a run the yards went to the mast-

head. Just before they got there came 'Let fall!' and the topgallant sails and royals were dropped. Then 'Belay main-top-sail halyards.' W. got impatient again about the main-topgallant halyards; it all to me seemed confused. The bugle sounded 'Attention.' Captain E. spoke to W., and then came, 'There was talking on the starboard gangway at the jib halyards; great confusion at the main bits; main-topgallant and royal halyards badly worked; ropes left not coiled down. Carry on.' The bugle sounded, work went on. 'Belay main-topgallant halyards. Belay main royal halyards. Brace up, set foresail, port braces.' A great many ropes seemed taken hold of; some were pulled in at once and left; then all waited with the ropes in their hands. 'Haul taut, brace forward, haul aboard!' The yards moved, the foresail came down from its yard with a bang. 'Belay the fore brace, belay the main brace, belay the crossjack brace' came from W. all in a breath. Then the flags were held up again, some to the right or left, and at different angles, showing without word of mouth what brace of what yard was required. Ropes were pulled on and coiled down, and the men fell in about the deck in parties two deep. No speaking; not a word. All the men were down from aloft. W. spoke to Captain E.; then I heard, 'Call the watch.' The boatswain's mate whistled and called, 'All the port watch.' Immediately after a midshipman told them to pipe the sweepers; at which they whistled away for some seconds, the result being that all the decks were swept. A sub-lieutenant went on the bridge, and was told by Captain E. that the staff-commander was to keep charge of the ship, the

leadsmen were to be kept in the chains, and that looks-out were to be placed in time; W. also telling him something, and then he introduced me to Captain E. They both hoped I had not been bored with being left to my own devices, and explained many things to me which I had seen, and which has enabled me to write this account.

No noise is allowed in her Majesty's ships, because, firstly, quiet is absolutely necessary in 'action,' and as that is the *raison d'être* of a man-of-war, all that tends for its readiness is borne in mind; secondly, so many things are done together, without silence everything would get confused; thirdly, it causes the men to think for themselves, instead of waiting for officers to think for them. Then the way I had noticed the men go from rope to rope was brought about by much dumb-drill, and doing everything slowly at first, at last attaining speed. The making sail by my time lasted 9 min. 25 sec.; but I had taken it from first to last: the real time to people looking on from other ships would have been 3 min. 15 sec., as they would have commenced when the swarm of men went aloft, and finished when the foresail was seen as set; and I was told sail was not made well: about 2 min. was their general time. Captain E. explained it all so well and so simply; he seemed to be one of those men who could speak without technicalities, and make you understand the common sense there was in everything that had been done.

With the exception of the officer of the watch, the staff-commander, men at the wheel and heaving the lead, nothing was being done. Cheery voices were heard talking from amongst the men forward; and I could see

down below in some of the messes men were sewing, reading, and writing; the officers were standing about talking.

Darkness was coming on, and the ship was steaming and sailing round the Isle of Wight. W. came to me and said, 'Now I can show you where you are to sleep;' and then took me down below the deck on which was his cabin, to the one lent me. How shall I describe it? Perhaps 6 ft. 6 in. broad, and 7 ft. 6 in. the other way; the height about 6 ft.—every available space of use; nothing clear except the deck on which I stood. The bed was over a chest of drawers, the halves placed end on to each other; another chest of drawers made the dressing-table, with ivory-handled brushes, a silver-topped dressing-case, scent-bottles, pincushion, worked mats, and pretty little odd figures, there being a ridge round the top of the drawers to prevent them falling off. One corner had in it a marble piece for the washhand-basin, in which I found ready a little can of hot water. Amongst the beams of the ceiling I saw a bath, two tin cases, and a rack for some fifteen pairs of boots and shoes; a gun-case was on a shelf; a fishing-rod, sword, and various sticks were held in a rack; a pistol and hunting-knife were over the pillow of the bed; the shelves were full of books, with but few exceptions medical works; pretty pictures and photographs were on all sides; and in odd places were looking-glasses, as I afterwards found, not placed there for a vain reason, but for the practical one of getting as much light as possible reflected from the round scuttle, about eight inches in diameter, the only way light came into the cabin. The looking-glass for dressing, with its gilt frame and branches

for candles, going up to the ceiling, gave a good 'looking-glass cabin.' Five candles were lighted as I came in by W.'s servant; and, with my clothes out on the bed, shoes on the deck, and an easy-chair to slip in, it looked so warm, cosy, and comfortable, I felt really this *is* the place to enjoy dressing. No walking about for this or that; a step to the left, and you can wash; a step to the right, reach your clothes; half-way, brush your hair and sit down; and when W. left me, telling me to come up to his cabin when dressed, the servant was gone, and the curtain drawn before the door, although there was enough noise from the screw, and some slight motion which assured one that one was at sea, yet the fancy was strong on me that I was on a stage in some pretty scene, and that 'dressing' was the part I had to play. It was public from the people who were busy outside, but it was quite private: the privacy made me long to lengthen out the time of dressing; the publicity made me careful in the manner of performing my toilet. The sound of a 'dressing-bugle,' which I understood as a warning for dinner, hurried me; and somewhat loth to leave the little cabin, I went to W., whom I found still dressing, but very angry with a big midshipman, a fine-looking lad, some eighteen or nineteen years old, whose offence appeared to me somewhat obscure. We stayed talking in the cabin till the dinner-bugle, when I followed W. to the ward-room, where I was introduced to the various officers—lieutenants, marine officers, doctors, paymasters, and engineers. The ward-room is a large space with cabins round; the mess-table stretches across the ship from the cabin on one side to the cabin on the other, leaving room for a per-

son to sit at each end, allowing the servants to pass; the president and vice-president sit at the ends, the rest as they choose. W., in virtue of being *ex officio* the senior member of the mess, never sat as president, but always on his left hand. I sat next, having on my left the gunnery lieutenant; opposite sat the paymaster and captain of marine artillery; the president was one of the doctors. A very well-appointed table, excellent lights; the pretty blue naval uniform, with the gold lace on the sleeves, relieved by a white waistcoat which every one had on; the marine subaltern's red jacket, the clergyman's black coat and M.B. waistcoat; the servants, marines, all dressed alike in blue, and who waited quietly and well,—made it altogether a scene of itself, quite unique and unlike any mess I had ever dined in before. The dinner was excellent: soup and fish, two *entrées*, two joints, and sweets. The wines had evidently been selected by a connoisseur. I may make special mention of the claret and the dinner sherry, a cask of which W. offered to get me the next time he was at Gibraltar. W. and I began that chat for which my visit had been undertaken; but I found myself forgetting all about old schooldays, and watching and listening to the conversation going on all round—pleasant good-humoured chaff, without a grain of bitterness, in which scarcely one whose foibles were not touched on lightly, and in some cases evidently lovingly. The conversation was first general, then individual; then general again, this time getting on the Russo-Turkish war, and on all that bore on it. The Conservatives were in an overwhelming majority, and the two Liberals had a bad time of it. I cannot say I heard anything very

statesmanlike on the subject of the war; but I heard many shrewd things said, and there seemed to be an ardent longing that the ship might be ordered to the Mediterranean—first, to have a go in at something, as the first lieutenant put it; secondly, to be under Admiral Hornby, the commander-in-chief there; thirdly, to keep the waterway of the Dardanelles open, and to prevent Russia holding Constantinople, as many seemed to think it a matter of time simply their getting there, in spite of Turkish gallantry. See-saw, up and down the table, went the talk. Odd snatches I heard. 'By Jove, how Bono Johnny will believe in Allah and his prophet Mahomet since he has had a Remington rifle served out to him!' from the end of the table. 'Given a Remington rifle as a means of faith, what ought an 18-ton gun to do?' 'That Gladstone is most peculiar, not to put too fine a point on it,' from about the middle. 'O, we will be out there before the end of the year, lay you even we are, in sovs!' from close round me. There was a brightness about every one's manner most pleasing, though their ages ran from twenty-two or so to about forty-eight.

Before we were half through dinner a mid. came to W.: 'Half-past seven, sir.' 'Stand by hammocks,' said W., asking to be excused. When he returned I found this was the time all the men took their hammocks from the nettings, which go right round the ship on the upper-deck, and hang them up below in their proper places.

After coffee we had to leave the mess to go up to a place set apart for smoking. I had my choice of W.'s cabin or with the officers, and chose the latter; but before I commenced I went by accident

on deck, and there found I was in time to see the watch mustered. The men were all in a cluster on the lee side of the quarter-deck, except a few, who I learnt were petty officers, on the weather side; the midshipman of the watch had a book on the capstan, and a man held a lantern for him to see; the officer of the watch, one of the lieutenants, stood so that every man passed him and could be seen that he was properly dressed and fit for duty; the midshipman called the names over from the book, the men answered by saying a number, passed from the lee to the weather side and went forward, the petty officers I noticed telling the men the hours they had to go to the wheel, lead, and look-out. There were besides the bluejackets a carpenter and a body of marines in the watch. As soon as the mustering was over, the midshipman reported, 'The watch present, sir,' and the lieutenant saying, 'Relieve the watch,' the boatswain's mate whistled and said, 'All the starboard watch,' and then 'Reliefs and lifeboats' crew, fall in,' when all the men who had been told off as they were mustered fell in, those from nine o'clock in one batch, ten o'clock in another, and so on. The men for the first hour instantly went to their posts, and the others were dismissed until five minutes before their hour, when they were to be again mustered. The lifeboats' crew were the men in the watch who composed the two cutters' crews, and some four men besides to lower the boats; as soon as they were dismissed they went to see that both the cutters were right and ready to be lowered, the coxswain and the extra men reporting it all correct. I was told the whole of this process was repeated at twelve, and at four in

the morning, the hours at which the watches are changed. Then I heard the following reports made to the officer of the watch within the next ten minutes: 'Starboard-bow light all correct, sir,' 'Masthead light all correct, sir,' 'Looks-out all correct, sir,' from a midshipman; 'Port-bow light all correct, sir,' 'Guns all secure, sir,' and with these reports ropes were also stated to be coiled down and clear. I then heard Captain E. call the officer of the watch and give him some orders; and just then one bell struck, and 'Starboard cathead,' 'Port cathead,' came from forward; 'Starboard gangway,' from a man sitting in the netting close to me; then 'Port gangway,' 'Starboard quarter,' 'Life-buoy.' This I found to be the practice every half-hour, to show the look-out men are awake and alert. Then the officer of the watch began to shorten sail, for the wind had fallen quite light. 'Watch, up foresail.' Up the men came. 'Haul tant, up foresail.' A rush of men from forward was all I could make out, it was so dark; and as I found ropes getting round my feet, I felt myself in the way, and went below to join the smoking-party, and there I was told about the watch-keeping. The officers were in four watches—that is, they kept a watch and then were off for three watches; the men were in 'watch and watch,' a watch on and a watch off alternately; at sea, they had eight hours on deck one night and four hours the next. On the eight hours' night they had the first watch from eight to twelve, and the morning watch from four until after breakfast at half-past seven; on the four hours' night they had the middle watch only, from twelve to four. When the men were in the watch on deck they were not necessarily

awake all the time ; they might be so, but only when there was work to be done, or it was their time as one of the relief; when not wanted they could sleep, but not in their hammocks, and they were allowed to go in the battery to sleep, and there they packed in close to one another, the sleeping crowd being called 'the mus-sel-bank.'

The men at the wheel were on for two hours, on all the other posts for one hour, the marines always taking the life-buoy post, and in bad weather one of the four places at the wheel. While we were smoking I could hear they were going on on deck taking in the sails ; there was no noise, but the officer of the watch did a good deal of shouting ; getting the sails in seemed to be something more than play. At nine I had to adjourn to W.'s cabin to finish my cigar, and while there a series of reports came to him : 'Compartments cleared up, sir ;' 'Fires and lights out, sir ;' 'Battery cleared up, sir ;' 'Mess-decks cleared up, sir.' 'What does all this mean?' 'O, the rounds. Come with me and see.' I followed W., and outside his cabin found a dozen people 'of sorts' all carrying lanterns. A procession was formed, W. and myself in the centre, and the marine subaltern bringing up the rear. We started, stooped under the hammocks—'Cooks, attention!'—and at the end of each mess a man stood up. 'All correct, sentry?' from the marine officer ; 'All correct, sir.' This took place every time he passed a sentry. Through the battery, through and round another set of messes, battery again, and then down below. Round the compartment everything was cleared up, and with the procession of lanterns everything could be seen. The quietness below seemed to

me so marked ; nothing could be heard of what was going on on deck ; when near the engines the swing of the machinery, and that was all. A prisoner in one of the cells was visited ; the other cell was empty. The galley-fire was out, but the captain's galley was not. When we came up to the place we had started from, W. went on deck to report the ship all correct below to Captain E. When he came below he took me down to the ward-room, and I found myself one of a very pleasant whist-party. W. left me, saying he must turn in, as he had to get up early in the morning, and he hoped I would sleep comfortably. We had just finished our fourth rubber and were talking over it, when a lantern appeared at the door and a voice said, 'Six bells, please, gentlemen.' There was only the whist-party left, so we broke up, I going on deck. As I left the mess the lights were all put out, and the man with the lantern seemed appeased, for he lighted me up the ladder, and I found he was the Fouché of the ship, the head of the police, known as 'Jaundey,' a corruption, so I was assured, of *gendarme*. On deck all work had ceased ; the sails were furled ; no one was to be seen but the officers and the looks-out. A moonlight, still, calm night ; the Portland lights in sight, and every now and then from the men round the ship came 'Light right ahead, sir ;' 'Light on the port-beam, sir,' all of which were examined carefully. The officers on duty speak to no one ; so I found it solitary, and went below. W.'s servant was waiting for me, piloting me down to the snug little cabin, lighting the lights, asking what I wanted for my bath—salt or fresh water, hot or cold ; when would I like to be called ; to mind how I got

into bed, as it was a swinging one; if I wanted a light or anything in the night to call 'Sentry,' and the man outside would come and do anything—send for him if I liked; he would call me at seven to-morrow—breakfast was at eight; the commander would be up at four, but would not dress till about seven; if I wanted to see the commander I would be sure to find him on deck at six, if I awoke and liked to go there; and so on. At last he said, 'Good-night, sir,' drew the curtain, and left me. I undressed very leisurely, for the cabin had a strange charm to me, being the smallest and cosiest place I had ever seen; but when, after some little difficulty, I got into bed, and blew the light out, I was very soon asleep.

I awoke to find it was just six o'clock, and remembering what the servant had told me, dressed and went on deck, where, as he had said, I found W. The decks were all wet from scrubbing, and the men were stowing their hammocks, each man coming up with one over his shoulder or under his arm, falling into rank, and giving up his hammock as his turn came to a man in the nettings, who stowed, assisted to keep the right height by another with a gauge. It all looked like a colony of ants carrying things to their nest. It was a lovely morning, the coast of Devon in sight adding to the beauty of the scene. The water quite calm, and a great many sail in sight—trawlers, ships, and steamers—some hundreds of them to be seen. The ship looked very neat, just as when I had got on board at Spithead; but still ropes were being pulled at to get them quite rigid. 'Would you like a cup of ship's cocoa?' 'Yes;' for I felt very hungry. 'Well, come along to my cabin

and we will have some.' Down W. and I went, and presently had a cup of cocoa each. I cannot say I liked mine particularly; it wanted a great deal of sugar, was what I should call coarse. The men have it for breakfast with biscuit—not much of a meal, from my point of view; but as they all looked in such good condition I argued their rations must be right, cocoa amongst other things.

I then went to my cabin to dress, and found the little place, with the bath in one corner, the bed turned into a sofa, my washing paraphernalia all laid out, and the candles lighted: the candles might have been dispensed with. After shaving I blew them out, having plenty of light from the round scuttle, which was open and let in a fresh sea air. I can quite fancy in any prolonged bad weather, when the scuttles have to be kept in, the atmosphere of these cabins getting unpleasant; as I saw it, it was most pleasant.

At eight o'clock there was breakfast, at which all the mess assembled. In spite of my cocoa I made a wonderfully good meal, and at half-past eight went on deck. The Eddystone could be seen, and also Plymouth. Captain E. asked me how I had got through the night—hoped none of the noises had kept me awake. When I told him how soundly I had slept, he said he believed sound sleeping was peculiar to ships, for he always slept better on board than he did on shore. By this time W. came to report nine o'clock, and the salute loaded, the bugle sounded, and the men fell in for parade. All round the ship they stood. Officers inspected them, and then the guns of their battery, reporting both to W. It was much like the inspection of the previous evening, only there were no arms. When

all officers had reported, W. reported to the captain, and the bell was tolled for prayers. 'Fall out, Catholics and Nonconformists.' Some ten per cent fell out, and the remainder were all marched on to the quarter-deck. The chaplain appeared. The bell ceased, and prayers were read, amongst them that beautiful one in Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea, which is only read in her Majesty's ships, and is there read daily. Officers and men stood uncovered. I suppose the prayers lasted six or seven minutes; when over the 'Disperse' was sounded, and the men were dismissed. Then came, 'Saluting party to muster at their guns,' and a salute of seventeen guns was ordered to be fired, for the ships could be seen at Plymouth Sound, and we had been signalling to them to say what ship it was, the salute being for the port admiral. We were now approaching Plymouth Breakwater. The well-known lovely scenery needs no description. In fact, having seen it often before, I was so taken up with what was going on in the ship as barely to give it a passing glance.

'Hands, bring ship to anchor.' Many feet on the move, and all one side of the deck men in small bodies had fallen in. Down below I found, where the cables were, another body of men stood. Lieutenants were sent for. The first and second were told about the anchors to be let go and the cable that was to go out. 'Harbour-master coming out, sir,' said the signal-officer to Captain E. 'Ease her;' and the engines were eased, then stopped. A boat came alongside, and a sailor-like looking man in plain clothes and a billycock hat came on board. 'How do you do? where are you going to put us?' said Captain E. There was some talking and point-

ing, and the ship went on again, everybody standing quite silent, W. only giving orders—'Call the galleys and duty cutters away,' 'Have the booms and accommodation ladder ready'—and just something now and then. The harbour-master directed the steering; we rounded the west end of the Breakwater, went on. Presently I saw a man by Captain E. hold up a flag, and the first lieutenant hold another up forward in response; the engines were eased and stopped, and I saw both flags drop, and as they did so I heard 'One, two, three; let go;' and some whistling, and the starboard anchor was dropped, out rattled the chain, and as it went out the flags were hoisted forward, 3, then 4, then 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; then up went the flag by the captain again; there was a grinding of the chain, the ship seemed held. Down went the flag, 'One, two, three; let go;' more whistling, and the port anchor was let go. 'Out swinging: booms;' the men who were on deck ran forward. 'Haul out;' and an arm was spread out from the ship on each side with a bang; the cutter and galley were also lowered. 'Moor ship, Captain W.,' said Captain E. 'Ay, ay, sir; hands, moor ship.' A deal of whistling, and 'Hands, moor ship,' was repeated by all the boatswain's mates. In the mean time the accommodation ladder was going out at the mainmast, and forward I could see a miserable-looking black boat also going out: this I found to be the copper punt. Presently the band struck up, and the men began to heave at the capstan. The flag the starboard side showed slowly decreasing numbers; the port side, as the chain rattled, they were increasing, till at last they stood at 5 and 4, and then the operation ceased. The cutter had taken the boatswain away, and

men had gone aloft to square the yards, uncover the sails covered for steaming, and cover some that are always covered in harbour. As the capstan finished, Captain E. ordered the galley to be manned, and permission to be asked to put out fires; this was done by signal to the port admiral, who permitted the fires to be put out; and the galley being ready, Captain E. went to report the ship, as he left saying good-bye to me, and kindly hoping I would have another trip in the ship some day again.

My *Bradshaw* having warned me that I must be sharp about a train, I had my traps packed up as soon as I had dressed, and when Captain E. had left, W. gave me a boat to go on shore. I had just time to say good-bye to those I could see, and hurried away. A twenty minutes' pull took me into Millbay, which is close to the station, and I caught my train, which got me to Ryde again that

evening. As the train rolled away with me I jotted down the notes from which I have made this account. It all seemed like a dream, but a realistic one. The calm grandeur of the ship, the quiet steady way in which everything went on, the utter absence of all hurry, anxiety, or trouble, and yet the careful earnestness with which all was done, had made an impression on me that I shall not forget, for I find it has made me look at royal ships, naval officers, blue-jackets, and marines in a light I had never before looked at them. I feel a respect for them I had not felt before, and also a certainty that they are trying to be ready for any serious work that may fall to their lot. Saying good-bye to W., we both laughingly found out we had scarcely touched on the talk of old days for which my trip had been undertaken; so he promised to have me again, if he could, to finish our talk.

F. W.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The House.

WITHIN the last two generations a revolution, bloodless, gradual, and unobtrusive, but none the less radical and subversive, has been working within our midst. Silently, yet surely, the invading forces of Wealth and Competition have marched into the once exclusive territory of Privilege, and dethroned her from her narrow and haughty position. We have had the age of the feudal system, when knightly deeds were the passport to distinction; we have had the age of superstition, when the priesthood was supreme; we have had the intellectual age, when literary activity was the high-way to fame; we have had the dissipated age, when gallantry was the only education of the satellites of fashion; and now in this nineteenth century we have in all its glory, ostentation, power, and vulgarity, the age of Money. Disguise it as we may, wealth is the governing force in our social system. Birth has its limits, intellect is fettered by restrictions; ready money alone amongst us can walk erect straight on to its goal, and be master of all it surveys. What barrier opposes it? It surmounts its newly-found escutcheon with a coronet, and takes its seat amongst the Howards and the Talbots of the House of Lords. It is sworn of the Privy Council and is enrolled in the Cabinet. It takes the oath before the Speaker, and is the representative of wealthy shires and important boroughs. It buys up lands, castles, halls, and manor-houses;

it is put into the commission of the peace, wears the scarlet and silver of the deputy-lieutenant and the gorgeous uniform of the yeomanry, and constitutes itself an important section of the landed gentry. It contracts brilliant marriages; it enters, and sometimes leads, society; its sons officer the crack regiments; its daughters command the matrimonial market; in short, there is no boundary to its ambition, no confine to its power. Instead of the pedigree-chart we have substituted the banker's-book.

There was a time, however, and that not very long ago, when wealth and social position did not necessarily go hand in hand together. Birth had its sphere and bullion its own world. Commerce drew its votaries from its own set, leaving the higher things in life to its betters. An unbridged gulf stood between the moneyed proletarian and the haughty aristocrat. It was right that the aristocrat should dance at Almack's, should play his rubber at White's, should command his troop in the Blues or the First Life Guards, should be returned for a close borough, and burden the state with his sinecures. It was his right, his due, the necessary consequences that ancient lineage entailed. As for the City man, he had his ambition and settled career: let him become a director of the East India Company, a member of the Court of Aldermen, Lord Mayor, the warden of a company, or anything that the commercial classes

may aspire after; but forbid it, Heaven, that his vulgar figure should obtrude itself into the coteries of society, that his plebeian hands should shuffle the cards in an exclusive club, that his sons should be attached to embassies or obtain commissions in crack regiments, that he should oust the landed gentry from the soil, and deem himself the equal of men whose ancestry dated back to the Conquest! Such were the views—views as old as the days of Aristotle and of Plato—that society held as to the position of commerce until the beginning of this century. Trade was ignoble; the only occupations fit for ‘a gentleman’ were arms, diplomacy, the Bar, and the Church. But such narrow teaching exists no more. Commerce, with its splendid fortunes, its exciting career, its rapid profits, has cast the professions into the shade, and counts among its followers some of the best blood in the land. What is the income of a leading barrister, of a renowned physician, of a bishop, or an ambassador, or a statesman, when compared with the colossal profits of a great tea-broker, corn-merchant, brewer, distiller, warehouseman, stockbroker, or of that omnivorous creature the general merchant? No wonder that the sons of peers gladly accept partnerships in good firms, that dandies go on ‘Change, and that the voice of Fashion declares that ‘there is nothing like trade nowadays.’ Privilege, with its airs and graces, its charms and imperfections, its patronage and its injustice, is dead and buried, and over its newly-raised mausoleum Capital and Competition dance in jubilant triumph.

I am led to make these reflections whenever I have the pleasure of meeting my friend Mr. Angus McWelder, the wealthy

ironmaster west of the Clyde, and member for the Forge Burghs. In none of our institutions has Reform been more busy with its destructions and innovations than with the House of Commons. Before the Bills of 1832 and 1867 became law, a young man of good blood or of great ability could take his seat upon the green benches of the Lower House as the nominee of some powerful peer or opulent squire, without it costing him a farthing. In this easy way the second Pitt, Canning, and Macaulay entered the House of Commons. But at the present day, thanks to Reform Bills and the establishment of election judges, to become a member of Parliament (save in certain exceptional cases, where brilliant talent or an hereditary name specially recommends itself to a constituency) requires money, and in many instances money alone. What chance has the most glib barrister or the most clever adventurer against some local plutocrat who builds a new wing to the town hospital, erects almshouses for the poor, subscribes liberally to the racecourse, gives cups at regatta meetings, and on all occasions drops his money as freely perhaps as he does his *h's*? What chance has an unknown new-comer, with a few hundreds advanced to him out of the funds of the political committee of his club, against the man of capital who has been ‘nursing’ the borough for years in the expectation of a vacancy, and who, in spite of bribery and corruption clauses, lets the inhabitants of the town know perfectly well that if they stand by him he will be their friend, spend his money amongst them, look after their local interests, and assist them in all their urban improvements?

Two things are now requisite

to obtain a seat in Parliament—money and a long courtship to the shire or borough. The consequence is that the House of Commons at the present day is a somewhat dull assembly; its members having taken to politics late in life, there is an absence of that youthful talent which made the House bright with its keen wit in the 'good old times' of close boroughs and nomination boroughs.

From what I hear of Mr. McWelder, he is not calculated, either by his wit or his eloquence, to enliven the character of the debates. He is interested in but one subject—the sewage question; and as the word 'manure,' which he calls, by the way, 'manyer,' enters largely into the composition of his speeches, the wags have christened him 'Old Guano.' No matter what may be before the House—the Estimates, affairs in the East, the repair of a turret-ship, Church reform, and the like—as sure as McWelder rises to speak, so sure will the current of his eloquence finally flow into the drainage question, until cries of 'Order, order!' 'Question!' and a friendly tug at his coat-tails from his nearest neighbour brings him down from the lofty height of his subject to his seat. The appearance of McWelder is not in his favour. His face is red and rough like a Highland steer, and crowned with light sandy hair which is turning gray at the roots. His eyes are small, and their expression marred by a most diabolical squint, caused apparently by a constant examination of a great wart which nestles closely at the side of the nose beneath them. His chest and barrel are huge and tremulous, and supported by short sturdy legs as bandy as the timbers of a sugar-cask. He speaks a language intelligible, I believe, to the members of his

family, but which requires great care and attention on the part of the stranger to master. At times when excited upon his favourite topic, or indignant with one of the morning-room waiters because the *Scotsman* has been mislaid or the *Glasgow Herald* has not arrived, I am fearful lest his burrs and his brogue should force the roof off his mouth. Like many men whose appearance is somewhat repelling, he is the essence of kindness. The nut is coarse and shaggy, but the kernel is sweet and tender. When you know him he talks simply of himself, and owns with pride that he began life by trundling a wheelbarrow in one of his own quarries. On most Wednesdays and Saturdays he engages the largest table in the strangers' dining-room of the Caravanserai, and feasts his constituents, men as red, as unwieldy, and as loud and singsong in their talk as himself, and who sit far into the night over their wassail of 'whusky' in the smoking-room. Next to telling a very long story, always about Scotland and Scotchmen, which is simply incomprehensible from its want of point and imitation of dialect to any one not hailing from the banks of the Clyde, the delight of McWelder is to reproduce before any audience that will attend to him, in his own peculiar language, the speeches that were made the night before by the more important members of the House. To listen to my friend you would imagine that he was on the most intimate terms with every member of the Government and of the Opposition, for he calls them all by their Christian names in conversation. If the Earl of Beaconsfield has laid before their lordships in the Upper House some important disclosures as to the state of foreign affairs during

a season of grave crisis, McWelder innocently remarks as he snorts over the *Times* to me or to some one else of his acquaintance, 'Ye should have hair-r-r-r-d Benjamin in the Hoose last nicht; it wur jist pair-r-r-fect.' Should the name of the Chancellor of the Exchequer crop up, it is McWelder's opinion 'that Stafford is doing vara weel in the Hoose, leddie; dinna fash yersel he can hold his ain against William.' When he alludes to the most noble the leader of the Opposition, or to the Right Honourable the Speaker, he speaks of those august persons in so familiar a manner that you might imagine he was a blood relation of the family. No matter who the man is whose life or whose character is being discussed, whether he be a Cabinet Minister or a judge or an ambassador or a bishop, provided that he at least be a somebody, McWelder will always make some casual remark about him, and designate him by his Christian name. Why he does this no one knows, for he is the last man to give himself airs and put on swagger. How he remembers the Christian names of all the great people he so familiarly alludes to is also a puzzle to me. Whisky must be very conducive to a good memory.

Until I became more intimately acquainted with McWelder, an acquaintance since cemented by a diligent study of Sir Walter Scott and the glossary to Burns's poems, it was a puzzle to me why he should have embraced a parliamentary career. He did not want a baronetcy; he had no social aspirations; his education, to put it kindly, was imperfect; he had no strong political opinions; he had no special grievances to air. Why, therefore, should an uncouth untutored man, who was the head of

a most important manufacturing industry, give up his valuable time, neglect his business, and incur a grave expenditure to embark upon a career for which he was both socially and intellectually unfitted? The question is a reasonable one; let me therefore answer it from information that I afterwards received. Mr. McWelder, as soon as Fortune began to smile upon him, and iron to elaim him for its own, took unto himself a wife, the daughter of a large manufacturer at Galashiels. For several years their married life kept the even tenor of its way. McWelder, engrossed by his commercial operations, had very little time for anything else, and what leisure fell to him was spent in improving the magnificent estate he had lately purchased from a Scotch peer, whose descent was as rapid as McWelder's ascent. As Mrs. McWelder annually for some seven years presented her lord and iron-master with pledges of her love with the most painful punctuality, she naturally had little opportunity for idleness. When she wanted change of air, she was delighted with a tour in the Highlands, or with the shooting-box on her husband's moors; and when she thought a little society would do her good, she and her husband took a house in Edinburgh for the winter. Neither their thoughts nor their ambition went beyond their being happy and useful in the position that Providence had placed them. Fond of her husband and of her children, Mrs. McWelder's life was one most equal and contented. But the serpent was on the trail to poison her with its venom.

It so happened that a Mr. Mc-Mashem of Ayr, a wealthy brewer and intimate friend of McWelder's, was returned to Parliament for Vatlivat. Mrs. Mc-Mashem now

lorded it over poor Mrs. McWelder, though they had been at school together and had learnt the Westminster Catechism together, to an extent not to be borne by human endurance. She took the *pas* of her on every occasion. She laughed at the people of Glasgow; she ridiculed the clerical and legal society of Edinburgh; she took her children from a Scotch boarding-school and sent them to Rugby; she quitted the Free Church and became an Episcopalian; she affected to talk English; and in short, she pooh-poohed everything and everybody about her. 'There was only one place to live in, and that was London,' she said over and over again to Mrs. McWelder. Indeed, the good lady brewed mischief as her husband brewed beer. The die was cast. Nothing would now satisfy Mrs. McWelder but that her husband should enter Parliament, and she be on a footing of equality with that 'ojous' Mrs. McMashem. Need I say that when a lady takes anything very violently into her head nothing on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth will prevent her from attaining her object? McWelder felt that if his life was to be bearable he must submit to his wife's wishes. He was somewhat disturbed in his mind as to which political party he should attach himself. Should he be a *Raadic*, or should he be a *Consairvative*? His impartial wife came to his rescue. 'Ah, Angus, dinna fash yersel aboot political opeenions; jist enter the Hoose o' Commons for ainy toon that'll tak ye! Ye can think of opeenions afterwards!' The prospect of an immediate vacancy in the Forge Burghs—which had been Tory since Sheriffmuir—decided McWelder to enrol himself in the ranks of the 'Consairvative' party. He hurried up to London, saw the political agent,

and was interrupted in an eloquent speech upon the purity and fidelity of his political principles by the practical question, What was he prepared to spend? It was the old story of 'them as pays my rent has my vote.' The Forge Burghs were commercially ambitious: they wanted a new dock; they wanted a new pier, a good quay, warehouses, harbour drainage, a junction with the North British Railway, and a few other moderate requests. The man who helped them the most in carrying out their intentions was sure of being returned. McWelder came down with his hundreds like a man, and soon caused his opponent—a respectable Edinburgh advocate, who could talk a horse's hind leg off upon such questions as education, the Established Church, the law of hypothec, Scotch currency, &c., but whose purse was more slenderly stocked than his head—to desist from canvassing. For the last five years the great iron-master has represented the Forge Burghs.

It is said that as soon as a man becomes acclimatised to the peculiar atmosphere of the House of Commons he cares to breathe no other air. This is the case with McWelder. Outside St. Stephen's all is now a blank and devoid of interest to him. His eldest son carries on the business, and his wife, thanks to ministerial receptions and to her hospitalities at the big house in Cromwell-road, is getting on in London society, and McWelder is left much to his own devices. He is always at Westminster, and is ever to be depended upon to make up a House; for when not in the presence of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, he is sure to be in the smoking-room or in the little apartment sacred to the genial Sergeant-at-Arms. He speaks

constantly; but as no one listens to him, he takes his revenge by writing out his speeches (with casual interpolations of 'cheers,' 'loud cheers,' 'hear, hear,' and 'laughter') and sending them to his subsidised organ, the *Forge Daily Blower*. He serves on committees, and it has fallen to my lot occasionally to hear him examine a witness; one of the clerks has at last been appointed as an interpreter. Nothing he delights in more than being attentive to such ladies as he ushers into their latticed gallery. How he hands them their tea! how he informs them of the customs of the House! how he points out all the distinguished members, talking of them of course as William and Robert and John and Henry! how polite, how garrulous, how egotistic he is! I fancy he does not tell Mrs. McWelder the names of *all* the ladies he puts down in the book. On an important night, when the entrance to the lobby is thronged with spectators anxious to obtain admission into the House, how slowly, how stately he passes the policeman and runs the gauntlet of inquiring eyes! Surely that bent figure, that thoughtful brow, that absorbed air can belong to none other than a Cabinet Minister full of the grave information he is about to lay before the House! How he stands about the lobby, with that peculiar House-of-Commons air which is so different from every other form of swagger, or unites himself to little groups of members, or walks arm-in-arm with a friend, solemn and thoughtful, as if upon his rounded shoulders all the responsibilities of the Empire rested! Yet he is no humbug. Though he thinks there is no club like the House of Commons—its chat and gossip the best, its dinners the best, its smoking-room

the best, its library the best,—an that he would like to be buried in a House of Commons coffin beneath the flags of the Embankment, still he serves his constituents well. He attends to all their local requests; works at what private bills they require; never shirks them when they call upon him; dines with them; puts their names down for the Speaker's or the Strangers' Gallery; does his best to get them places in the Customs or the Revenue; patronises their sons; promises a good deal, and fulfils not a little.

As McWelder belongs only to the Caravanseraï, he uses the club very frequently. Whenever her Majesty or the Speaker holds a *levée*, he generally puts in an appearance afterwards in the smoking-room to exhibit the green and gold of his Archer's uniform. The waiters fear him, for his orders are not very intelligible to the Southern ear, and he is apt to be irritable when asked to repeat his request. He is fond of the society of young men, many of whom, I regret to say, with the insincerity of youth, eat his dinners, smoke his cigars, dance at his wife's balls, ride his horses, use his opera-box, ask him for Speaker's orders, and then behind his back imitate his peculiarities and ridicule his kindnesses. Fortunately McWelder is not thin-skinned. He can listen unflinchingly to the derisive laughter of the House when turned against him; he can bear unmoved its offensive indifference to his speeches; chaff, innuendoes, invective, are powerless to wound him. With amusing blindness McWelder is under the impression that he is a practical statesman and a politician of a high order. The office he especially considers himself fitted for is to be President of the Local Government Board. He has lately been elected

a member of the committee of the club ; consequently his first duty was to make inquiry into its drainage system. Undoubtedly, as McWelder says, a special knowledge of any subject is always useful in the House of Commons ; but it is doubtful to me whether my friend's ' special knowledge ' is of such a nature as to bear him on its unsavoury tide to office, however humble. His seat is sure ; his fortune large ; his wife is avaricious after social honours ; he has spent a good deal of money for ' the party : ' it would not therefore surprise me if some day we should see on the panels of the gorgeous barouche that occasionally waits for McWelder outside the Caravanserai, the blood-red hand.

There must be something terribly fascinating in parliamentary life which the stranger to its existence fails to understand or sympathise with. When I see a man like McWelder not only interested in, but engrossed by, his duties, it is evident that St. Stephen's has charms which she only displays to those admitted within her circle. It cannot be the social distinction that once attended upon the letters M.P., for at the present day many of our legislators are little better than town councillors. It cannot be the prizes of the profession, for out of the six hundred and odd members how many draw salary from the Treasury ? Why should a man abandon his business, give up much of his leisure, be absent from the country when it is most beautiful, live for many hours in a close atmosphere, keep late hours, have to attend to often dull and laborious work, spend his money, receive no pay, and be on terms of acquaintance with a vast number of people many of whom in all probability are repulsive to him, and all for

the honour of being returned to Parliament ? Yet, considering how every seat is competed for, there must be some powerful attraction in the green benches of the House of Commons, which we, who are not under the wand of the magician, fail to comprehend. I can understand certain men—the venal, the ambitious, the intellectually active—embracing a political career ; they may win or they may lose, but still the struggle is worth the effort. What I cannot understand is, why the men who constitute the majority of the House of Commons, the men who cannot hope to get anything, who do not even wish to get anything, who are mere voting-machines and Wednesday orators—I cannot understand why these should disburse large sums of money, should subject themselves to much physical labour, should swallow self-respect for a vote, should be eternally badgered, worried, and annoyed, for what to my simple gaze seems a game hardly worth the candle. Some little time ago a friend of mine, a man whose birth and fortune render him independent of the ordinary aspirations of mankind, caught a terrible cold. He was put to bed ; a blazing fire was all aglow in the room ; the sudorific he had taken was agreeably acting ; a sense of comfort and relief tingled through his frame ; quiet and contented, he was immersed in the pages of *Le Nabob*. Suddenly his door-bell was rung, a messenger came in hot haste from ' the whip,' and he had to hurry down to the House of Commons to swell the ranks of the Government against the tactics of a mischievous Opposition. Why should he have subjected himself to this ? *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère ?* He never speaks in the House ; he is pale with terror

even when he has to address his constituents; he never serves on committees; he does not want a peerage; he is not a barrister intent upon reaching the woolsack; the House of Commons can give him nothing that he has not already; and yet session after session he submits to boredom, to late hours, to a bad atmosphere, and to numerous restrictions interfering with his comfort and his liberty.

I doubt whether McWelder, in the days when he was consolidating his iron business, worked much harder than he does now for the honour and glory of the thing. What with writing letters to his constituents, listening to their wants, their grievances, their applications, bothering the patient and long-suffering clerks of the House of Commons about the private bills he wants to introduce, serving on committees, occasionally being a member of a Royal Commission, hunting up references in *Hansard* for his speeches and replies, and putting in a constant attendance (when has his name been absent from the division list?) at the debates of the House, he never appears to have a minute to himself during the session; and what little leisure he possesses always seems occupied in dining his constituents, taking Mrs. McWelder to receptions, going to a State ball or concert or two, and in attending *levées*. It is only very early in the morning or very late at night that his presence haunts the writing-room and smoking-room of the Caravanseraï. Even out of the session he is constantly occupied. When he is good enough in the autumn to ask me to Anvilhaugh Castle he can seldom spare time to shoot the grouse on the moors or the pheasants in his well-preserved coverts, because he has to preside at this dock committee, or that railway committee, or the pier

improvements committee, or the Forge Burghs Young Men's Christian Association, or the Forge Burghs Quarry dinner, or the Masonic meetings of the Hammer Lodge, or the hundred and one other calls upon the time of a man who is both a popular and hardworking M.P. and an extensive landowner. Still McWelder is not to be pitied. He is so thoroughly wedded to his new life that were he to be unseated to-morrow no man north of the Tweed would be more miserable.

As for the fair *châtelaine* of Anvilhaugh, she has for a long time ceased to trouble herself with the McMasheims of this life. A lady whose dinners are as well dressed as herself, whose dances are famous for the excellent condition of the floor and the magnificent suppers that follow, whose two daughters are supposed to have eighty thousand apiece, and who is every season increasing her social reputation, need take little notice of those she knew in the days of her obscurity. 'They are not in my set,' she says to me in excellent English, and in the tones of one who from her earliest infancy has been born in the purple, and always worn the colour. Ah, Mistress McWelder, though the Westminster Catechism may have taught you much, methinks the articles in the creed of London Society have taught you more! Weigh husband and wife in the balance, and the husband will be found to be the better and more sterling of the two. On the bed-roll of baronets you may find men more polished with the gloss of civilisation, and better educated with the lore of the schools, but not one more honourable in his dealings, more indefatigable in his labours, more honest and just, than the future Sir Angus McWelder, Bart., M.P. for the Forge Burghs.

COSMIC METEOROLOGY.

SCIENCE retains strong hold of its votaries; stronger even than Literature and Art. Although Rubens might be persuaded to act as ambassador, Bulwer to try his strength in parliamentary debate, and Disraeli to neglect the profession of novel-writing for that of party-leading, we can hardly fancy Newton leaving his *Principia* unfinished in order to take ministerial office, or Davy renouncing his laboratory for the sake of a seat in a Cabinet. Quite recently a portfolio tempted M. Faye to join the French 'Ministry of Affairs;' but any one could easily guess beforehand that Astronomy would get the master of Politics.

In fact, the expectant Director of the Paris Observatory served two masters, during a brief interval, in the usual way. How he held to the one while engaged to the other may be seen from a manifesto 'Sur la Météorologie Cosmique,' proving that, in spite of an excursion into the realms of government, his heart, untravelling, still returns to his first love, Physical Science. He is to be congratulated on his final choice; and so also are the readers of the lucid articles which he will now be spared from political struggles and squabbles to write at leisure.

M. Faye, deeply interested in Meteorology, is wedded to the belief that every meteorological phenomenon is produced solely by the heat of the Sun; which is a simple and, he thinks, a sufficient cause. But nowadays that cause is not enough. Attempts are

made to call up cosmic influences, outlying powers, as entitled to meddle with the matter. Spirits are summoned from the vasty deep—such as planetary forces, the spots and the rotation of the Sun, shooting stars, the Moon, besides electrical and magnetic actions supposed to be incessantly intervening between the fixed stars and our system. This upstart intruder, Cosmic Meteorology, which is daily encroaching on the domain of true science, requires examination—that is, putting down; and M. Faye forthwith, in an elaborate 'Notice,' puts it down accordingly. We can easily conceive him, while a Minister of a day, hugging tight in his pocket the proof-sheets of that Notice, as more precious than all his official documents put together.

The Moon! Is it worth while extinguishing the Moon? Why, the vulgar prejudice of her influence on the weather is an error which has been over and over again refuted. M. Faye proceeds at once to get rid of the Moon, and to occupy his mind with more serious business.

For everybody, he pleads, accords to the Sun the privilege of regulating the course of the seasons. Their majestic alternations harmonise well with the march of a heavenly body who constantly meets our eyes with the same invariable aspect. But changes of the weather, so unexpected and frequent, seem to require, people think, a more variable origin. If we consider the daily vicissitudes of rain and sunshine, of fogs,

winds, clear skies, and clouds, the Moon is the only heavenly body whose rapid alterations of form and position answer to such unceasing variations. She has an old-established reputation for inconstancy; witness Juliet's apostrophe:

'O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.'

In truth the Moon's course does really offer numerous periodical changes, without taking into account anomalous events, such as eclipses and others. If the weather's caprices are more or less periodical, they can hardly be richer in contrasted periods than the Moon herself is. Moreover, prediction-makers have the additional resource of lunistics, when the Moon is stationary; of the epochs when her declination is either north or south, when she crosses the equator or the ecliptic, when she is on the same side of the equator as the Sun, or on the opposite side. Note well that all these circumstances really have some influence on the ebbing and flowing of the sea; whence, sailors do not fail to conclude, they also influence the tides of our aerial ocean.

If we accepted literally every lunar prejudice, the Moon would rule many things besides the weather. Madmen and lunatics would be subject to her power. There are veterinary surgeons who say that the sight of certain horses becomes dim or clear according to the phases of the Moon. Woodmen insist that if trees are felled with a waning Moon, the wood will speedily decay. Housewives declare that if you kill your pig, as you ought, with a crescent Moon, the bacon will swell nicely in the boiling; if, on the contrary, when she is

in the wane, it will shrivel, shrink, and be hard and good for nothing. Finally, all sailors in a mass, except the most highly educated officers, attribute every change of weather to the Moon. Why? Nobody knows. Suchlike prejudices must be accepted, and their truth taken for granted, without discussion. There is no want of instances.

M. Faye was once walking in a friend's pleasure-ground, in company with the gardener. A woodpecker passed before them, in its undulating flight from tree to tree.

'What a pity I haven't my gun!' the man exclaimed.

'But why should you kill the poor bird?' asked M. Faye. 'He lives on insects and their larvæ which he finds in the bark, and so does good instead of harm.'

'Monsieur, he riddles the trees through and through with holes.'

'Ah! You fancy that that weak little creature can do with his bill what you would have a hard task to manage with an auger!'

After a moment's hesitation the gardener confidently replied,

'He uses a plant, which we do not know, but which makes his beak as hard as steel.'

It is exactly because prejudices are beyond the reach of discussion that it is so difficult to bring them to reason. Natural philosophers have perfectly explained the phenomena attributed to *La Lune Rousse*, the Red Moon, which are really caused by the state of the atmosphere. Gardeners, nevertheless, persist in making the Red Moon (the lunation between the Paschal and the Pentecostal Moons) responsible for the morning frosts which frequently occur at that season. But the ancients never entertained the idea that the Moon's phases were the cause of changes in the weather; it was Jupiter's privilege to assemble the

clouds and to dart the thunderbolts. The lucky and unlucky days of the lunar month belong to Astrology and not to Meteorology. Bouvard, Arago, and many others have proved, by long series of observations, that the Moon does not affect the weather. Labour in vain! The majority of sailors interpret the Moon's age, each according to his own private rule of belief. The only effectual refutation would be to strike at the root of the evil in early youth, and make school-children repeatedly recite and copy truthful sentences, such as, 'It is ridiculous to believe in sorcerers, witches, were-wolves, and Red Moons;' 'It is not true that the New Moon changes the weather, that the Full Moon eats up the clouds, that thunderbolts are made of stone;' and other items of the vulgar creed. Accurate knowledge of facts might thus be promoted by a catechism of things not to be believed.

There is some excuse for people who forget that the world is wider than the horizon which bounds their vision. If the weather happen to change within that horizon, when the Moon becomes full, they assert, by the most natural of human sophisms, that the Full Moon is the cause of the change. They make no inquiry whether the weather has changed elsewhere, within the circuit of other people's horizons. They are not aware that, often, the weather changes with them, while a couple of hundred leagues away not the slightest change has taken place. If cognisant of the fact, they ought to remember that the Moon must shine alike for all, and that she could not, by the same action exerted on the same day, bring unclouded skies and sunshine here, and rain, hail,

or snow within easy telegraph distance.

An infallible mode of disproving the supposed connection between the phases of the Moon and the changes of the weather is to keep a register of both. If such a physical connection really exists, the discrepancies, purely accidental, will be few in number; and the wider the range of cases recorded, the smaller will be the proportion of disagreements compared with the total number of cases. In fact, the thing has been already done by serious meteorologists, who have undertaken the ungrateful task of submitting popular dicta to the test of facts. From Serafini's observations at Vigevano, comprising thirty-eight years, it was inferred, 'In every case we may conclude, in opposition to the vulgar opinion, that it is vain to expect from the quarters of the Moon any presage of the weather's variations.'

What the Moon evidently wants in order to be able to affect the weather is heat. Scientists have long tried to make the Moon's heat-radiation sensible, but in vain. Now the illumination produced by the Full Moon is only one eight hundred-thousandth part of the solar illumination; if we take the heat-radiation to be in the same proportion, the Moon gives us only an imperceptible fraction of warmth. Double the amount, multiply it ten times, a hundred times, and you do not get beyond an imperceptible degree of heat. How, then, should the Moon's heat dissipate the clouds when the Sun himself cannot always manage it?

Sailors will give you a more plausible reason. The Moon upheaves the watery ocean; why should she not act in like manner on the aerial ocean? The author of the *Mécanique Céleste* answered

the question long ago. Laplace gave the formula for calculating the atmospheric tides due to the Moon's action. Bouvard, analysing accordingly the heights of the barometer observed at Paris during eight consecutive years, found the lunar atmospheric tide to amount to the eighteenth part of a millimètre—a millimètre being the twenty-fifth part of an inch. Thus the Moon's heat reckoning for nothing, and her attractions producing only insignificant oscillations in the atmosphere, what other means of changing the weather are left to her? None at all. The true cause of those changes is to be found nearer home. Ever since we have become familiar with the grand gyratory movements which sweep over both our hemispheres with a velocity superior, even in our climates, to that of an express train, we know that cyclones, commencing generally in equatorial regions, describe immense trajectories with almost geometrical regularity, and produce by their passage every change of weather. Their laws have been repeatedly stated by English and American writers as well as by M. Faye himself. The solar heat is their only determining cause; the Moon has nothing whatever to do with them, any more than she has with the squalls, showers, storms, and such-like, which follow in a cyclone's train at any phase of the Moon indifferently.

Cosmic Meteorology is founded on the idea (no doubt theoretically true) that everything in Nature holds together; that the remotest portions of the universe act on each other. The Moon being hopelessly put out of court, let us see what influence the Fixed Stars exert on our affairs. Now everything which is imperceptible by our senses and inca-

pable of detection or measurement by our instruments may be considered, at least provisionally, as non-existent for us. Every cause unable to change our temperature by the hundredth part of a degree or to raise or depress our atmosphere the hundredth part of a millimètre—and, *à fortiori*, still smaller fractions—may be considered as absolute nothings.

Now although the Stars are veritable suns, pouring forth torrents of light and heat, although they are strictly innumerable, their distance is enormous, and their radiations reach us so weakened by the journey that they vanish in the presence of the solar heat. The illumination produced by the Full Moon is estimated to be eight hundred thousand times less than that from the Sun. But the feeble light which reaches us from all the Stars put together is considerably inferior to that from the Full Moon; so that the combined light and heat of all the Stars are certainly several million times weaker than those from the Sun.

We reach the same result by a different process. Admitting (what cannot be far from the truth) that the twenty millions of Stars, which Herschell's eighteen-inch telescope enabled him to discover and count in the sky, are, on an average, of the same size and splendour as our Sun; as we cannot estimate the mean distance of those Stars at less than ten million times the Earth's distance from the Sun, the light received from each one of them will be that of the Sun diminished in the ratio of one to the square of ten millions. Now by multiplying this very small result by the total number of Stars, or twenty millions, we obtain for the total light from the stellar universe perceptible in the aforesaid telescope no more than one

five-millionth part of the Sun's light.

An idea may be formed of the immense power and preponderance of the solar radiation by observing what occurs at total eclipses. The moment that the first ray darts forth from one single point or speck of the solar disk, the darkness of the eclipse vanishes with astounding suddenness, and daylight returns as if by enchantment. Now all the Stars united would be far from producing the same effect as the apparition of a morsel of the solar surface not more than one second square, which surface contains in all nearly three millions of those superficial squares. The same effect may be witnessed, though in a less striking degree, by watching a cloudless Sun rise from the sea in a southern climate. As soon as the least bit of the Sun is above the horizon, not only is there dazzling light, but stinging heat is immediately felt.

Our globe consequently receives heat from two external sources: one, concentrated in the Sun; the other, disseminated in the form of Stars over the whole vault of heaven. By these two sources of heat it is maintained at a mean temperature of 15° C. above freezing water (59° F.)—that is, at 288° C. above the absolute zero of interstellar space. It will be seen at once how trifling is the share in those 288° C. which is due to the stellar universe. It is not the less true, however, that that very small share does really exist.

As to the influence which the planets of our solar system can exert upon the weather, we have but to remember that, although they shine like Stars, it is only with reflected light and heat. They are no longer incandescent bodies like the Sun, but have

cooled down into solidity long ago. The Sun's presence maintains them at a temperature which we are not likely ever to ascertain precisely, but of which we may form some idea from the knowledge that our Earth, one of the best situated amongst them for receiving and storing the radiations of the central star, has only the aforesaid mean temperature of 15° C. above the freezing point. Whether as sources of heat or as screens intercepting heat-radiation into infinite space, all the planets of our system are without appreciable action on our globe. On this point there cannot be two opinions. Nobody, for instance, has set to work to measure Venus's or Jupiter's action on our thermometers.

Consequently, M. Faye triumphantly concludes, since our satellite, the stars, and the planets practically count for nothing in the changes of the weather, what remains but the central luminary and sustainer of our system, the Sun, as the all-potent and only cause of every meteorological phenomenon which occurs in our atmosphere? He it is who regulates the seasons and the grand aerotelluric circulation of water which is the source of the most varied results and events. His radiations suffice to account for all we witness passing on Earth, from the vegetation of the humble moss to the destructive violence of tornadoes and tempests. And if our globe is the scene of quite diverse phenomena, such as those appertaining to electricity and magnetism, it is because all the forces of Nature, except Newtonian attraction, are correlative and monogenetic; that is, they can all be derived from, or transmitted into, each other, and can be developed by simple transformations of one force, Heat.

‘MAY-BLOOM.’

WHEN the rosy flush of the almond shows,
And the young buds break, and the roses bloom ;
When the golden light of a sun that glows
Is sweeping the purple skies from gloom ;
When the young day laughs in a gladsome noon,
And the jasmine stars at the casement shine,—
Then welcome the merry May-tide bloom,
And the budding fancies that leap to rhyme.

When the breath of the evening breeze is low,
And the waters darkle beneath the fern ;
When blithe young feet pass to and fro,
And soft lips smile and soft hearts yearn ;
When love is a lesson that's sweet to learn,
And the coo of the dove is a song divine,—
Then welcome the glory of May's return,
And the budding fancies that leap to rhyme.

When the leaflets wake from a tranced dream,
And the bloom and blush of the spring is here ;
When a laughing face is a fancy's queen,
And the vow of a life is the vow of a year ;
When never a thought is dull and drear,
And the young month laughs in her ‘wanton prime,’—
Then welcome the bloom of the May-tide dear,
And the budding fancies that leap to rhyme.

L'ENVOI.

Though the beat of pulse may be dull and slow,
And the blithe young limbs grow frail and old ;
Though the aged blood has a measured flow,
And the sky looks dim and the sunlight cold,—
Yet still is the bloom of the May-tide dear,
With its dreams of hope that were once divine,
And the breath and blush of the glad young year
Is the sweet refrain of a vanished rhyme.

RITA.



MAY-TIDE SONG.

I have been a child of the sun and the dew,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,

And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,

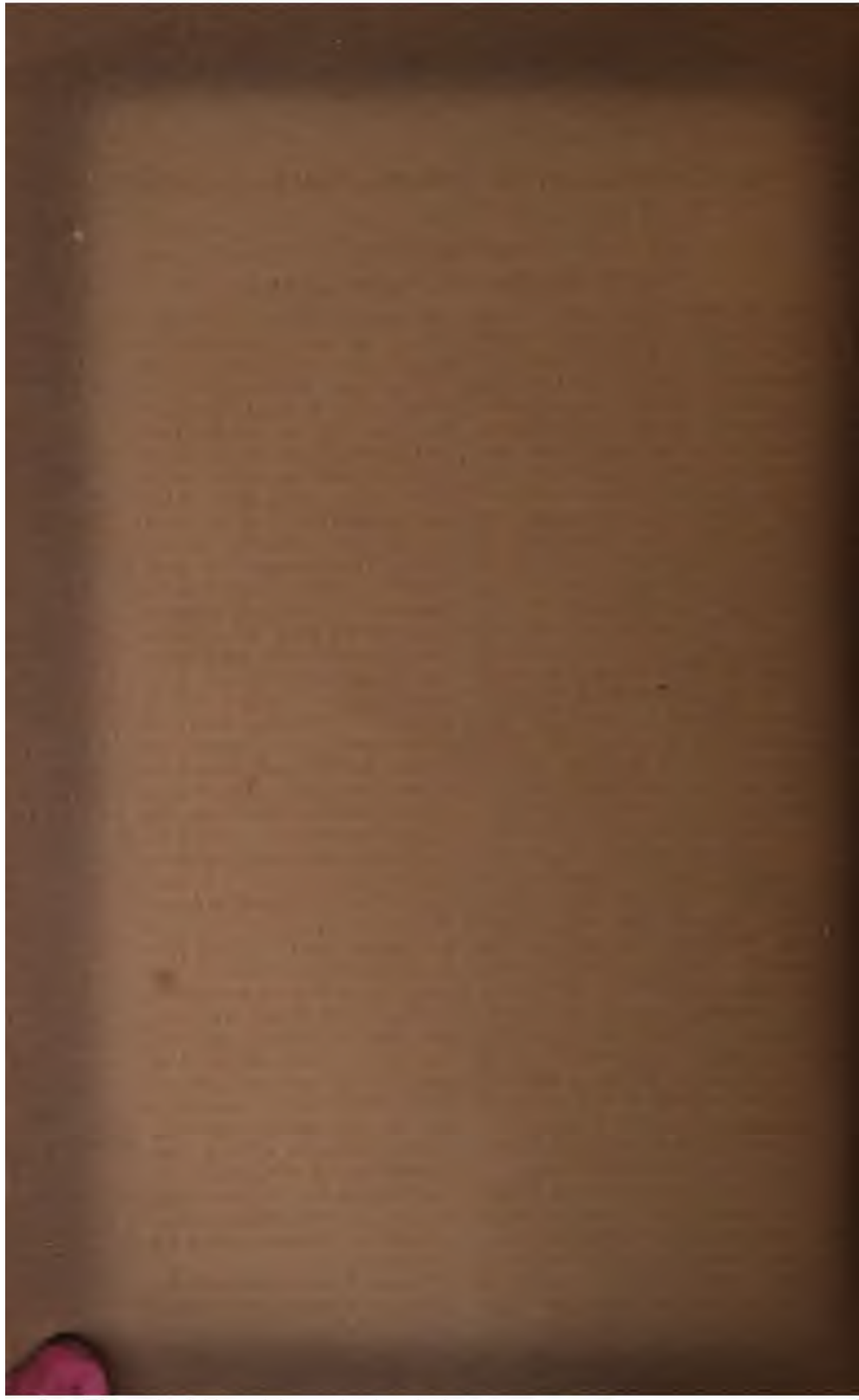
And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,
 And the flowers and the grass, and the birds and the bees,
 And the wind and the rain, and the stars and the moon,

LITANY.

There is the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,
 And the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,
 And the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,
 And the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,
 And the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,
 And the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,
 And the beauty, pale may be dull and skew,



MAY BLOOM.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER IX.

SHOWING HOW TRAVELLING IMPROVES THE MIND.

At the top of the bank opposite to me, and immediately beneath the kind of hedge I have just described, a little cloud of dust rose from time to time at regular intervals. A succession of slight explosions was taking place; at least, such was at first the effect upon me. Reflection convinced me that this phenomenon was produced by some living creature occupied in a work the object of which I could not make out. My curiosity was vividly excited, and, unable to resist its promptings, I determined to go and examine more closely what so puzzled me.

Having carefully noted the spot I must reach to watch the phenomenon at my ease, I let myself slide down the bank beneath me, and having quickly reached the bottom, I proceeded to climb the one opposite to me.

It was not without some trouble that I gained the top—that is to say, the part of the bank immediately beneath the ledge formed by the hardened soil and the roots of plants, a kind of rounded overhanging cornice which it was of course impossible for me to scale. It would, moreover, have been useless to go higher; for I was now on the same level and within easy reach of the spot from which had recently proceeded the clouds of dust of which I was anxious to ascertain the cause.

I had been waiting a few instants when a fresh explosion showed me the exact spot where the work was going on, but I could still make out nothing. Several minutes passed and there

was no sign of life. Yet, according to my own calculations, I must be close to the miner. Had he seen me? That was scarcely likely; for if he had, I must have seen him. It was more likely that, having become aware of my approach from the slight noise made by the rolling down of the sand beneath my feet as I climbed up, he was prudently keeping quiet. This appeared the more probable as the silence was so profound that the very slightest sound would have been heard. I had noticed before going down into the path that the clouds of sand rose just beneath a tuft of thyme, the flowering stems of which gave a touch of rosy colour to the otherwise leaden hue of the brow of the bank. The tuft of thyme stood out against the sky a little distance off. Guided by this trustworthy sign I crept along slowly and noiselessly. 'It must be here,' I said to myself, as I came to the edge of a perfectly round hole like a funnel. 'This hollow is not the work of chance. But where on earth is the workman?'

Not a trace of any living creature was to be seen anywhere. The solitude was complete. I approached the hole, and admired the symmetry of its proportions and the exquisite regularity of the banks, forming an inclined plane finished off with the greatest care. I noticed that the banks were formed of quite soft earth, a fact I verified by plunging one of my feet into it.

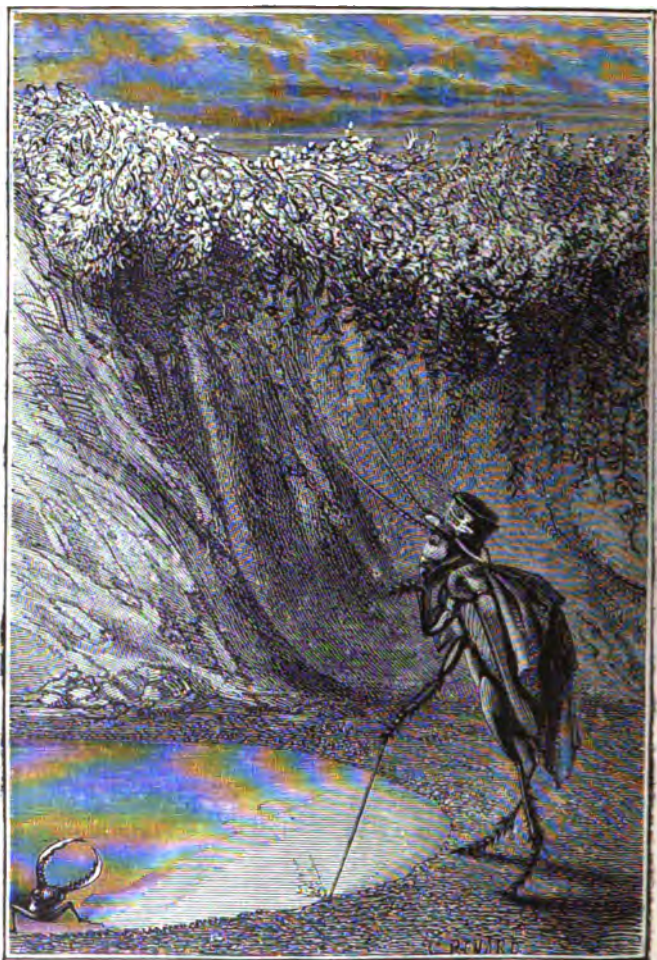
Whilst I was making my examination a voice, which appeared

to come from beneath me, suddenly ejaculated a vehement oath, and in an angry tone apostrophised me as follows :

‘ Out of the way, up there ; off with you, you clumsy fellow ; don’t

you see you are spoiling my work ?’

At the same moment a little head armed with two huge mandibles appeared above the sand at the very bottom of the funnel, and



glared at me with anything but a mild expression.

I confess that this sudden apparition and the speech which accompanied it gave me a sensation greatly akin to fear. I have already owned that I am nervous, and I do not like surprises. I consider myself pretty brave when I am

face to face with an enemy, even if he is stronger than I am ; but I repeat I do not like surprises : it is a case of natural temperament.

My fright was, however, of short duration. I was reassured when I saw how very small was the head from which proceeded the

abuse repeated above, and I looked at it inquiringly.

'Well,' observed the new-comer presently, 'do you think you shall know me again? Come, mind your own business, and leave me to mind mine.'

When I heard this strange creature request me to let him attend to his business, I wondered whatever he could have to do at

the bottom of a hole which he had apparently made himself.

'Pardon me, friend,' I said to him, in my most insinuating manner; 'pardon me if I have put you out in the least, and believe that I had no intention of doing so. I had no idea you were there, buried as you are at the bottom of that hole, into which you have probably fallen by accident. I will



help you out of it.'

This proposal, which I only made to appease him, had the desired result. It made him laugh.

'Idiot!' he replied, in a blunt, but no longer angry, tone; 'I made this hole myself, and if I am at the bottom of it, it's because it suits me to be there.'

'You are making fun of me, I do believe. How can I credit your having dug out such a hollow all by yourself, and that without any definite motive?'

'Whether you believe it or not, the fact remains the same. I have made that hole by myself, and I have made it for a very definite reason.'

I felt sure he was speaking the truth, for the clouds of sand I

had seen from a distance were now accounted for. But how such a little creature could accomplish so singular a task, and what was its object, I was still very curious to know.

'Of course I believe what you say,' I replied; 'but will you be so good as to tell me what was your motive in accomplishing this *tour de force*?'

'I have no reason for making a mystery of it,' he replied. 'I feed upon living prey, and I have a special fancy for ants. But as they run faster than I do, and I can besides only walk backwards, I should die of hunger if I did not hunt them by setting a trap for them.'

'I understand,' I answered;

'when they tumble into your funnel you spring upon them before they have time to get out again.'

'Wrong again, Cricket. I can't jump any better than I can walk. This is what I do.'

At that my little friend first drew back his head, and then jerking it suddenly forwards he discharged such a volley of grains of sand at me as would have knocked me down had I not been strong enough to withstand the charge.

'There,' he said, 'that's how I receive the ants whose ill-luck leads them to my door. I bring them to my feet without any trouble with my shower of sand. When I have sucked their bodies dry with my maxillæ or minor jaws, which you see are specially fitted for the purpose, I jerk their crushed carcasses away in the same style, and await a fresh victim.'

I was astonished. But suddenly a recollection shot across my mind.

'Are you not an ant-lion?' I cried.

'Of course I am.'

'Ah, I heard of such creatures in my childhood, though I don't remember when or from whom; but your mode of life is not unknown to me. I have been told of your wonderful way of catching ants and making them roll down a precipice by pelting them with sand, but I had forgotten all about it. Listen a minute—you will change your appearance some day; you will have wings and hover in the air like butterflies and dragon-flies, will you not?'

'Just so; that is to be my future fate. Presently I shall make myself a solid cocoon of sand, in which I shall pass about a fortnight without eating and in a state of immobility. During that time my metamorphosis will be imperceptibly going on; my

wings will grow, and I shall have nothing to do when I wake but to split open the simple costume I now wear, and to gnaw through the cocoon which will have protected me during my transformation. I shall then spread my wings and joyfully take my flight through the air. You see that if my present condition of life is wretched there is a more brilliant experience in store for me in the future. I think of it in the long hours of inaction to which my present mode of existence condemns me, and the thought does not fail to console me in my daily misery. I think of it too when I am laboriously constructing my trap. Life would be very hard but for the hope of a happier future.'

'Of course, of course; you reason as men do, friend ant-lion; and I should be glad to think that the ants you massacre daily console themselves in the same way when you hold them between your jaws and suck out all their juices. But tell me now how you manage to dig your funnel. I should be very much obliged if you would show me how you go to work.'

The ant-lion made no immediate reply to this request, and I saw that he was looking at me furtively.

'Perhaps I am presuming too much,' I said; 'you have interested me so much already that I am very anxious to complete my knowledge of your mode of life. I like to improve myself; and I should be sorry to leave you without having this one gap filled up in the extraordinary narrative you have given me.'

'Listen to me,' replied the ant-lion, 'and I will tell you frankly what made me at first hesitate to comply with your wishes. My weakness makes me distrustful, and I am afraid that if I leave my refuge—'

'Can you imagine for one moment that I harbour any evil intentions towards you? Crickets, Heaven be praised, have never had the reputation of being either knaves or traitors. I hunt, I confess, but,' I added, proudly drawing myself up, 'it is in broad daylight, and without the use of artifices unworthy of our race. If, as you seem to suppose, I had had any intention of injuring you,

would there have been any need for me to entice you out when I could easily have butchered you at the bottom of your hole?'

In thus indicating my chivalrous character I forgot, as one is apt to do sometimes, that the qualities on which I prided myself were just those in which my interlocutor, who lived by stratagem, was wanting. He was not hurt by my tirade, however, but seemed



struck by the force of my last argument.

'You are right,' he replied; 'pardon my hesitation, I rely implicitly upon your good faith.'

With that he proceeded to climb the bank of his funnel, which he soon accomplished. I now saw him as a whole for the first time, as until then his head and mandibles alone had been visible.

He was a very strangely constructed little creature. His body, of about the size of my head, was of a dull-grayish colour, and seemed

feeble. His thorax was small in proportion, and so was his head, which was flattened at the top. From it, as I have already said, sprang two long thin sickle-shaped mandibles serrated on the inner edges. His gait was most extraordinary. He did not walk on his feet as we all do, but curving the lower portion of his body, and clinging with it to the sand, he drew himself backwards in jerks. He did not show the whole of his body above ground, but remained half buried in the sand, leaving a

pretty deep furrow behind as he went along. I followed it closely. When he was a little distance from his hole, he informed me that he was going to begin his operations. I then saw him mark out a circular furrow of a diameter equal to three times the length of my body, or from ten to twelve times that of his own. I admired the perfect regularity with which he described this circle, which he must have done, however, by instinct, for he could not see it, buried as he was in the sand. I have said that he moved in jerks. I must add that at every step he took his head, which he held down, was flung up, as if moved by a spring, throwing off the sand with which it was covered. I now again observed the peculiar little explosions, which had puzzled me so much when I first noticed them from the top of the other bank.

'You now see how I go to work,' the ant-lion observed to me presently, as he paused from his labour; 'it's needless to do any more, because I go on just as you have seen, except that I gradually contract my circle as my hole grows perfect. It's a hard task, I can tell you.'

I asked him how long it took him to finish his trap.

'An hour at least,' was the reply; 'and if it is not well placed I catch nothing, and have to make another. Sometimes too it is destroyed by accident, and all my work has to be done over again. Fortunately,' he added, 'I have not to endure this life of toil much longer. I have attained my full size, and I shall soon shut myself up in my cocoon, to undergo my metamorphosis.'

I thanked the ant-lion warmly for the readiness with which he had satisfied my curiosity, and in taking leave of him I said a few words of congratulation on the subject of his approaching transformation which appeared to gratify him.

I now prepared to go down the bank, delighted at having extended my walk so far. Just here the bank was almost perpendicular, and I hesitated a few seconds as to whether I should jump into the path or return by the easier way by which I had come. This hesitation, by slightly delaying my departure, was very near being fatal to me, as will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

A CATASTROPHE.

OF the two courses open to me, I chose the second. I turned to the right, and, following the base of the cornice mentioned above, I reached the spot where the bank, sloping gently down, rendered my descent easy.

I neglected to say that during my conversation with the ant-lion the sky had clouded over. Gradually the air, which had been very hot in the morning, became heavy and oppressive, and the intense stillness of the atmosphere,

in which the foliage of the neighbouring birches and aspens remained absolutely motionless, presaged an approaching storm. Indeed, before I left the shelter afforded me by the overhanging ridge beneath which I was walking, a flash of lightning, followed by a loud clap of thunder, warned me that the tempest was about to break. At the same moment heavy drops of rain began to fall, and the pattering sound made as they fell on the leaves of the

trees increased rapidly, till it became a sound of dull continuous rumble. Presently the ground was deluged with a steady down-pour. Under these circumstances, it was of course impossible to think of going on. I was completely under shelter, so I waited where I was for the storm to blow over. It was only a thunder-shower, which would not last long.

Presently I noticed a little stream of water running along the hollow path beneath me. This stream gradually increased in volume till it became a small torrent, which, following the path, emerged from the wood, crossed the strawberry-bed, and finally flowed into the pond at the bottom of the valley.

The rain still continued to pour down, and soon the water began to trickle from the ridge which protected me, forming a number of parallel trenches on the banks. Protected by the ridge of earth, I was watching the fall of the avalanches with interest, and admiring the foresight of the ant-lion in setting his trap under shelter from the rain, when I suddenly felt wet. I turned round abruptly, and saw water pouring down the wall against which I was leaning. At the same moment some small stones fell from above me, and looking up I observed with terror that, undermined by the damp, the mass of earth forming the roof of my shelter was giving way, and about to fall upon and crush me. Quick as thought I sprang on one side.

Of what followed I have but a confused recollection. I rolled from the top to the bottom of the bank, with stones, sand, and fragments of all kinds; and when I recovered from the shock of the sudden catastrophe, I was being

carried down the stream cheek by jowl with all manner of *débris*, against which I was rolled and jolted. I dimly remember clutching by instinct at some object which was rolling with me down the torrent, and retaining my hold of that object.

Our instinct often leads us to do foolish things for which we have to pay dearly. If I had been in a fit state to reason on the situation in which I found myself, I should most certainly have known better than to grasp at anything harder and larger than myself; for I ran a risk of being crushed by it in the wild leaps we took together.

However, things did not turn out so very badly. After taking a series of somersaults, and shooting a succession of rapids in a space of time which to me appeared of inordinate length, I found myself in stiller waters, and the deafening tumult of which I had just been the victim was replaced by a reassuring silence. I gradually recovered my senses, and I then perceived that the object to which I was clinging was neither more nor less than a fir-cone, with which I had shared the dangerous descent described above.

The fir-cone was floating on the top of the water, and I tried to climb on to the upper side, so as to take breath, of which I was urgently in need; but I soon discovered that that was much more easily said than done. The scales, it is true, made first-rate supports for my feet; but when I tried to hoist myself out of the water, over rolled the cone, and I found myself beneath it. After several attempts with the same results, I thought I would try and climb my very unsteady bark at one of its ends—myself, you understand, representing the axis

on which it turned. By this means I succeeded not only in gaining the top, but in remaining upon it, a very difficult gymnastic feat, as you may imagine.

It was with a feeling of intense

relief that I found myself in this improved situation, which, if not even yet altogether satisfactory, was certainly incomparably preferable to that from which I had emerged. I had thought myself



lost, and it was really nothing short of a miracle that I had kept all my limbs intact in my terrible adventure. The first thing I did was to draw breath again and again; the second, to look about me, and take stock of my present position.

I was floating in the middle of

a vast sheet of water almost completely enclosed by a sloping lawn, which was dotted here and there with clumps of shrubs. I knew this pond well; it was in the park I had entered at the beginning of my travels. I had seen it in the distance at the bottom of the valley on this very morning when

I was looking about me from the edge of the wood. Yes, there was the little wood, and beyond it the wild paddock skirting it; beneath sloped away the great strawberry-bed, cut across by the hollow path of which I had just made such a precipitate descent, and below that again ran the road, only separated from the pond by a green bank. Jets of water were still flowing over this declivity, the remains of the stream, which, converted into a torrent by the storm, had made its way across the road to the pond, bringing me with it.

The rain had almost entirely ceased. The sun, now near its setting, was bursting through the clouds, its oblique rays lighting up all the surrounding objects. The storm was over, and the soft air, laden with refreshing scents, gently fanned my face. Flocks of martins, uttering their shrill cries, flew rapidly overhead, and a few swallows skimmed the surface of the pond now and then, just ruffling its waters with the tips of their wings. One of them, flying close to me, almost toppled me off my perch, and their gyrations made me very nervous. It was only with the greatest difficulty that I retained my balance on my fir-cone, in momentary fear that a touch on one side should send me beneath it. At a little distance off I saw a large water-lily leaf, and I thought to myself that if I could but reach it I should be safer and certainly much more comfortable than on my present unsteady support.

When I made my plunge the current of the water quickly carried me away from the borders of the pond; but this current gradually subsided, so that now my fir-cone did not move at all; or if it did, its motion was almost imperceptible.

The storm had raised the level of the pond considerably, and had violently agitated the water. Its surface was strewn with bits of stick, blades of grass, and the dead bodies of insects. Examining these melancholy relics of the tempest, my attention was attracted by a movement in the water near the lily-leaf mentioned above. All I could actually see were the circular ripples resulting from the movement, but I guessed that they were produced by some insect struggling perhaps for dear life. I called out several times to attract his attention, and show him which direction he should take, if he were still able to keep himself afloat and to swim. A voice seemed to answer me, but so faintly that the sound hardly reached me. It was evident, however, that I was heard, and that help was needed. But what could I do to assist the poor drowning wretch? In the hope of encouraging him to fresh efforts by the prospect of speedy succour, I redoubled my cries, and an answer came, this time, as it seemed to me, in a voice both louder and less distant. I went on calling, but all the noise I made had a result very different from what I expected. As I stood on tip-toe, trying to make out the poor creature whom I hoped to save, and saying all I could to encourage him, a huge and hideous head suddenly appeared just where the insect should have been, and a great mouth opened and closed with a snap. Then all disappeared again, making a great wave surge up, which reached and all but capsized me. I had witnessed a tragedy. Deeply moved, not only, I confess, with sympathy for the victim, who after all was a stranger to me, but at the thought that I might share his fate, I awaited the reappearance of the

monster, who, you will have guessed, was nothing less than an immense frog. Probably he was even now preparing to spring upon me. I had foolishly attracted his attention by my cries. Selfish fear got the better of me, and I cursed the foolish pity which had actuated me. It was well worth while, I thought, to be troubling myself about the

safety of others when my own life was in such jeopardy.

Whilst I was thus taking myself to task for my generous feelings, I suddenly saw that I was close to the lily-leaf. The eddy produced by the plunge of the frog had, unnoticed by myself, drifted my bark near it. One rapid glance calculated the distance between me and it, and then,



drawing myself together, I sprang upon it.

Evidently things were beginning to mend. My new resting-place was larger and firmer than the other had been, and I was glad to stretch my limbs, stiff as they were from remaining for so many hours in the same position. It was without regret that I watched the fir-cone, which had carried me so long, gradually disappear, drifted away by the recoil after my spring from it. An unfortunate shipwrecked mariner does not hesitate to cling to the rock on which he is flung by the waves, even if that rock affords him neither food nor shelter.

My case was somewhat similar. The apparition of the frog had

terrified me, and I had hastened to exchange my far too rickety vessel for a firmer resting-place. The leaf on which I had alighted was large, perfectly smooth, nearly circular, and absolutely deserted. I went round it. I confess it did not offer any special advantages in the way of food, but my first care had been to escape being eaten myself. Like all who are shipwrecked I trusted to time and some lucky chance to escape sooner or later. What I noticed in the water, which was beginning to become clearer, contributed not a little to add to the feeling of security which now made all my happiness. The pond was peopled with other monsters besides frogs, and once

I saw a very formidable-looking creature appear on the surface of the water. It was taller than I am, but not so stout; and the motion of its body, which was made up of flexible rings of a greenish colour, resembled that of a snake. Its large and powerful head was armed with huge and very sharply-pointed mandibles. It glared at me for a moment with a ferocious expression, which made me shiver. It was certainly no harmless creature. I had never seen anything like it before, and I did not know its name; but I have since ascertained that it was the larva of a dysticus or water-beetle, one of the most formidable inhabitants of the water.

Night was now approaching, and bats soon began to make their appearance. One of them flew very close to me, and I could not fail to recognise that their presence added greatly to the peril of my situation; for, isolated as I

was on the lily-leaf, there was nothing to hide me from these voracious vampires; on the contrary, my black body stood out conspicuously against the monotonous green colour of my raft. What was to be done? I began to despair of escaping from this new danger, when a happy thought suddenly occurred, which I lost not a moment in carrying out. Hastening to the edge of my leaf I seized it between my mandibles, and then drawing it firmly towards me as I leant backwards I bent it nearly double. O, delight! There I saw a juicy mollusc sticking to the under-surface of my raft. To seize it and carry it beneath the cover I had just arranged was the work of a moment. With one stroke I had won my supper, and a roof over my head. Secure now of a quiet night I ate my meal with relish, and then proceeded to take the rest of which I stood so sorely in need. I was soon sound asleep.



SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER VII. THE FOREST CANTONS: FROM EINSIEDELN TO ALTDORF.

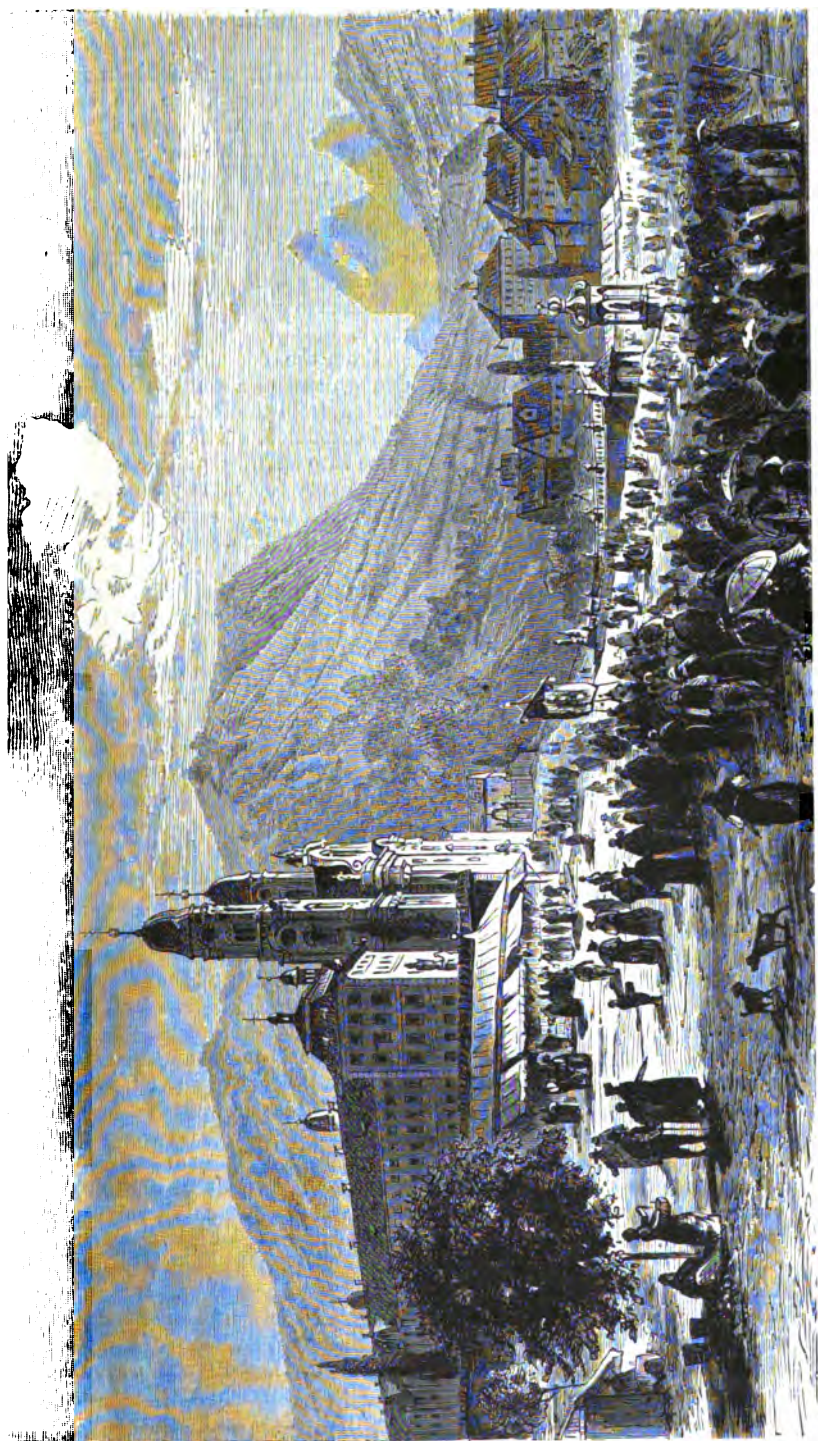
'And hail the chapel! hail the platform
wild,
Where Tell directed the avenging
dart,
With well-strung arm that first pre-
served his child,
Then aimed the arrow at the tyrant's
heart!"

GEORGIANA, DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

Now we are about to wander through a fair and peaceful region which may be called the Helvetic Latium, the classic land of Switzerland, where the seeds of her future greatness were sown. Wherever we go, from the top of Mount Etzel, which lies on the northern threshold of the little canton of Schwyz, to the mysterious region of St. Gotthard, from the precipices of Glärnisch to the summit of the Rothhorn, which towers above the Lake of Brienz, in the valleys and on the mountains, on the shores of the lakes, in the dark pine-woods, under the fruit-trees, in the narrow streets of the ancient mountain-villages,—everywhere we shall find ourselves accompanied, not only by the grave Muse of History, but by her less serious sisters, Legend and Romance, who are just as fresh and blooming now as they were centuries ago. If we come with child-like hearts, we shall find the whole region of the Forest Cantons alive with memories; and, as we wander along with Schiller's *Tell* to serve as guide-book in our hands, we may expect to derive much real pleasure from our ramble. But if any one should be disposed to laugh at us and say, 'Do have done with your William Tell!

Will you never give over raising that misty mythical hero of yours aloft upon the shield of history? Has it not been conclusively proved that there never was such a person?'—well, we have our answer ready, and it is as follows: 'Tell, or some man to whom the people assigned the name of Tell, must have existed, and must have distinguished himself in such a way as to make an indelible impression upon the minds of the people. Popular tradition does not fetch its heroes from dream-land or cloudland, and then fashion them into living figures. Tradition takes note of those only who make themselves noticeable; and she deems those only worthy of being inscribed on her roll and handed down to posterity whose great achievements, intellectual or political, have won for them a claim on the love and remembrance of a nation. So these tradition chooses a special darlings, adorning their memories with the fairest images of her fancy, and casting a sort of supernatural halo round all the events of their lives, only that she may thereby the better adore and marvel at the wondrous way in which Divine Providence has guided them and watched over them.'

And surely if such a man as Johannes von Müller declares the result of his investigations to be a conviction that 'our hero certainly did live in 1307, and that in those places where thanks are still offered to God for his success



ABBEY OF EINSIEDELN.

he actually did perform such deeds as led to the deliverance of his country and entitled him to the grateful remembrance of posterity,' then surely we wandering summer-birds may gladly agree with him, and own that the poet is right when he says :

'While mountains stand and hills remain
the same,
The archer Tell will never be forgot.'

Let us, therefore, sympathise with the enthusiasm felt by the Swiss for him who represents to them the love of liberty in its most glowing form ; and let us not be too anxious and careful about names and dates, for, after all, what is any name but an empty sound ?

Perhaps, on first coming into the Forest Cantons, fresh from the bright shores of the Lake of Zürich, where life is full of pleasant bustle, and where wealth, culture, and civilisation have their head-quarters, we shall be struck by the contrast presented by these much poorer villages, by the absence of thriving industries and the superabundance of churches, chapels, and convents ; but we must not forget that ten or twenty years ago everything was in a much more backward state than it is at present, and that progress is sure to penetrate into these valleys along with the steam-engine ; for people so ardently attached to freedom, as are those who dwell about the Lake of Lucerne, cannot fail to love progress too, since the one cannot come to perfection without the other. The contrast, however, will perhaps strike us especially if, on leaving Zürich, we take the railway as far as Pfäffikon, on the southern shore of the lake, and then proceed to ascend the inhospitable Etzel, which stands like a boundary-wall between the little canton of Schwyz and that of Zürich.

Pfäffikon itself is a monkish stronghold, and everywhere we see signs of the monkish rule which has prevailed here for centuries past. The road over the Etzel is one of the great pilgrim-highways, and has been trodden by hundreds of thousands of pious pilgrims in times gone by, and will no doubt continue to be trodden by as many more.

From the blooming smiling garden which lies about the Lake of Zürich, from the land of sunshine and cornfields, we have suddenly come into an inhospitable region, where very few attempts seem to have been made to bring the soil under cultivation. It is a relief to look back from the top of the mountain upon the bright landscape and the flourishing villages we have left behind ; but the devout pilgrim will here turn aside into the chapel of St. Meinrad, who came hither a thousand years ago, and led a life of loneliness and contemplation in the depths of the wilderness. Like many of his contemporaries, he, the son of a noble race, felt impelled to withdraw from the disorders of his time, and was attracted from Bollingen, which we see yonder in the direction of St. Gall, to the wooded summit of Mount Etzel, where he built his first hut, and remained for seven years. At the end of that time even this spot was not sufficiently retired to satisfy him, and he went farther on into the depths of the gloomy Finsterwald. Here, on a rocky plateau by the side of a copious mountain-stream and surrounded by fir-clad hills, he laid the foundation of what has since become a celebrated monastery. It stands nearly in the centre of the Alp- and Sihl-thal, and has developed into a building of such magnificence as to form a startling contrast with the wild inhospitable

region around. Meinrad was murdered by two robbers; but a pair of pet ravens, birds which have always been on good terms with the followers of St. Benedict, pursued the assassins, and eventually led to the discovery of their crime.

The hermit's cell was gradually enlarged century by century; and now if the saint who passed his life in voluntary poverty could see the grand monastery which occupies its site, and could gaze upon the treasures of gold and precious stones which it contains, he would think it was all some witchcraft of the *Fata Morgana*.

As we descend the *Etzel* we are met by the wild impetuous river *Sihl*, and we see the bold bridge which has been flung across it. Like the one on the *St. Gotthard* road in the south, it is called by the people the *Devil's Bridge*, and the demon after whom it is named is no other than *Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus* von *Hohenheim*. The house in which he was born is said to have stood close by the bridge, and may still be seen there: his youth was passed in *Einsiedeln*. Perhaps the great chemist, physician, and mystic lived a few hundred years too soon.

We are now in the canton of *Zug*, and a short journey will take us from *Unter-Aegeri* to the little town of *Zug*, the principal place in the canton. It stands at the north-east corner of the *Lake of Zug*, and looks like an antique gem in an old-fashioned setting, a genuine example of mediævalism. No other town has so faithfully preserved all the characteristics of the Middle Ages, both in form and in colour, in its walls, towers, gates, and doorways. Even *Lucerne* is less antiquated, and the mediævalism of *Schaffhausen* and *St. Gall* is confined to a few particular streets. It looks as if

a *Holbein* or *Dürer* must have painted its dark colours on the bright green background formed by the hills behind; and, as it looks into the lake and beholds itself mirrored in the clear waters, it sees the self-same reflection that met its gaze centuries ago. In fact, *Zug* is the *Swiss Nuremberg*, and there are people who go so far as to say that the forms and features of its inhabitants have altered just as little as its buildings; so it is no wonder if the air both in churches and courts of justice strikes one as oppressively mediæval too, and somewhat fusty besides, nor if the dust of past centuries lies thick upon many of its institutions. Was it not in *Zug* that, until quite recently—within the last few years, indeed—torture was employed to extract the truth from prisoners?—a fact which occasioned the stern interference of Government, and proves that the terrible instruments shown to strangers in the *Kaibenthurm* were by no means harmless curiosities a short time ago.

The town looks like some aged grandmother asleep in an arm-chair, of very, very ancient date; there is no life or cheerfulness about it: brooks run dreamily down the streets, and above the ornamented gables floats the sound of bells coming from a dozen different churches and chapels and a couple of convents. The stranger may well look round him in astonishment, and wonder what he can find to do with himself. But there is enough to be seen, after all. First, there is the view of the *Rigi* and *Pilatus*, which is very grand and beautiful even when seen from the shore; but if we ascend the tower of *St. Oswald's Church*, it is finer still, and from the *Zug ridge* it opens out into a perfect panorama.

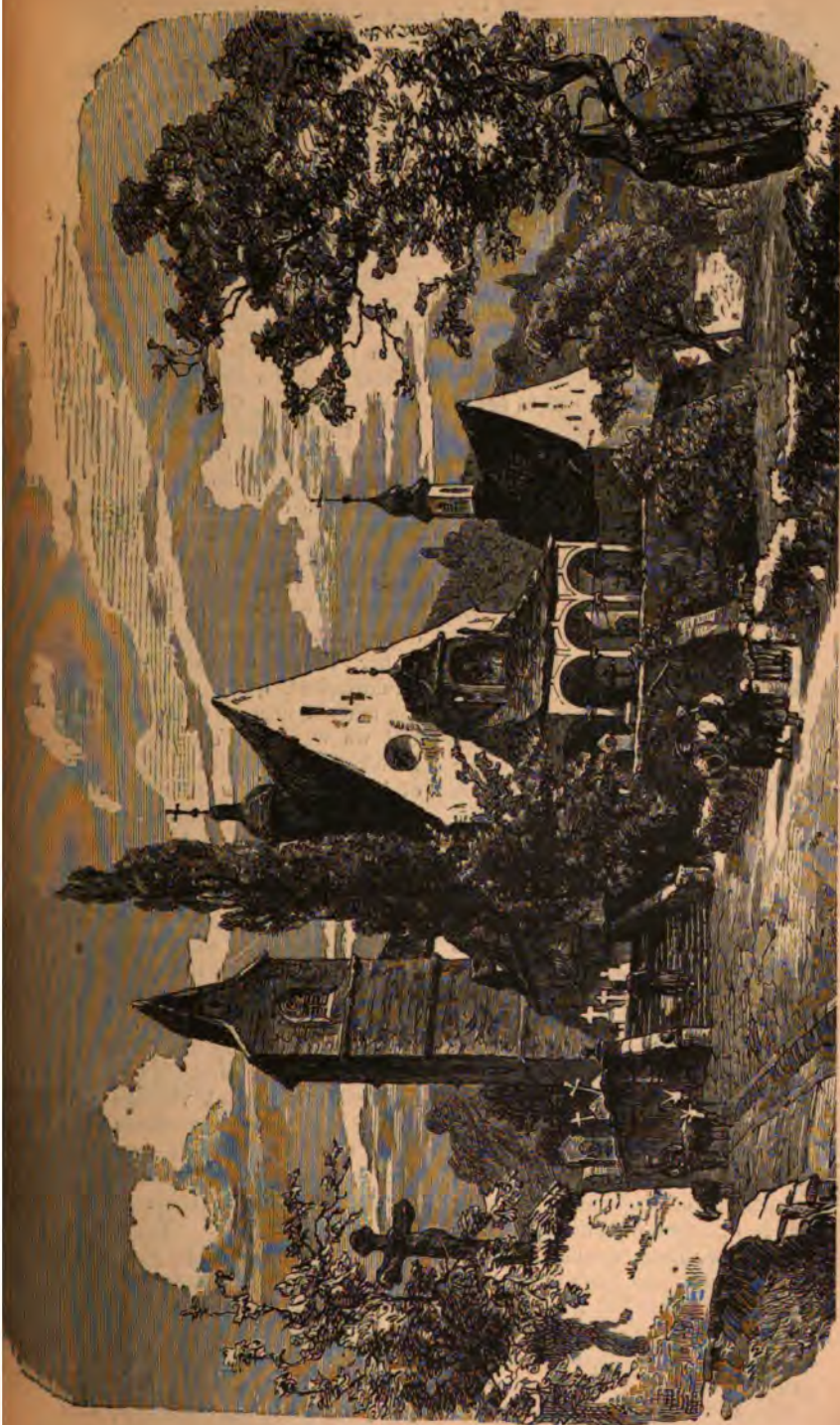
When the summer sun is shining the lake, will be of a peculiar greenish-gold colour, and then it is a perfect picture of calm idyllic repose, surrounded as it is by a landscape consisting of sloping hills, Alpine pastures, fields, woods of deciduous trees, as well as pines, meadows, and groves of fruit-trees. It is very different from the busy scene presented by the Lake of Zürich. But the Lake of Zug is often dark, even sad-looking, and then again it is calm and dreamy—a perfect poet's lake. From the Zugerberg you have also a good view of the numerous bays, headlands, and promontories which diversify the shores of the lake, and of the dark luxuriant woods in the foreground, from among the foliage of which peep forth scattered dwellings, clusters of houses, the Castles of St. Andrew and St. Buona, and, on the western shore, the hamlets of Cham and Risch. To the north you see nothing but a green plain and an endless vista of orchards interspersed with villages, which stretch far away to the foot of the Albis ridge. To the south are two dark masses which remind one of the side-scenes in a theatre, the one on the left being the Rigi, and the one on the right, somewhat farther off, the gloomy Pilatus, or Mont Pilat. You look between the two into the bright sunny valley of Unterwalden, and the background is closed by the Gyswilerstock, the Rothhorn, and the Brunig, which leads into the Bernese Oberland, whence the snow-white crests of the glaciers look down in dazzling brilliancy. This surely is entertainment enough; but those who do not care to ascend the mountain may stroll out of the little town through the orchards which border the lake, and into the open country in the direction of Arth.

No sooner have we emerged from the narrow streets than we see the influence of modern times in the tasteful houses and villas which have been built upon the green-wooded slopes. The road along the eastern shore is very smooth and pleasant, besides being sunny and cheerful and full of variety. Those who have ever driven through the old wood of Eyola on a bright summer day, when the birds were singing in every tree, and the noble old Spanish chestnuts, natives of another clime, were spreading their thick foliage overhead, can hardly have helped bursting out into a song of jubilation, or if they did not sing, surely they must have whistled:

It cannot be portrayed in words,
And colours from the artist's store
Can never give the purple light
Which broods upon this sacred shore.

And see, we are on sacred soil again, almost without knowing it! We have reached Arth, and Arth is in the canton of Schwyz. The ascent of the Rigi is made from this place; but we are going to keep the Rigi for a *bonne bouche*, and will turn our steps towards Schwyz in the mean time.

Observe the various convenient roads which diverge from Schwyz to all points of the compass. There is one very beautiful one leading from Arth across the desert of Goldau, and along the Lake of Lowerz to Brunnen; then there is the new main-road running along the Horgenberg and the Lake of Zürich to Einsiedeln: the road from Brunnen, into which the new Axen and Gersauer roads open; and another new road to the Muottathal, and so on. He will also discover that there is a convenient and very beautiful way up to the top of the great double-peaked mountain called the Mythenberg, where more laurels



ST. MARTIN'S CHAPEL, ZUG.

may be gained than by the ascent of the Rigi; for, in the first place, the Mythenberg is not as yet desecrated by a railway, and in the second it is some three hundred feet higher than the Rigi.

The two peaks, called the Greater and Lesser Mythen, rise in naked beauty from the green ridge of the Hacken, at the foot of which lies the little town of Schwyz. In former days it was considered a deed of the utmost daring to climb them and to plant a cross on the summit of the loftier of the two, in token of success; but now many people make the ascent, and it is quite within the compass of any young lady who is well shod. Moreover, side by side with the solitary cross now stands a modest little inn, on the very top of the Great Mythen, whence the view is—Well, if we were to say now all that might be said about it, we should rob our old acquaintance of the finest pearls in his crown; so we will adjourn the description for the present, and say adieu till we meet again on the Rigi.

A three-mile walk from Schwyz brings us to Brunnen on the Lake of Lucerne, where we shall find ourselves surrounded by a perfect *embarras de richesses*. One hardly knows which way to turn first. There are conveyances of all kinds passing to and fro—carriages, chaises, &c., without number; the lake is sparkling in most tempting fashion; steamers, boats, and skiffs are darting hither and thither across the smiling waters; and a multitude of places are beckoning us in different directions. There are Stoss, Treib, Seelisberg, Beckenried, Lucerne, Schwyz, Seewen, and the Muottathal, none of them very far off; then there is the grand St. Gotthard road running southwards, and there are the wildly beautiful valleys which

open into the Reussthal, among which that of Maderan stands preëminent. Moreover, we are close to some of the most classical spots in Switzerland, such as Rütli, Tell's Chapel, and Schiller's Memorial, the Mythenstein, a rock so called, which rises like a grand obelisk from out the lake. Even those who prefer staying at home will find quite enough to entertain them in the garden of the Waldstätter Hof, the best hotel in the place, whence they may gaze across the lake at the dark mountains of Uri and Unterwald, and rest assured that, so far as other matters are concerned, they cannot do better than leave themselves entirely in the hands of their capital landlady, Madame Fassbind, who will certainly not disappoint the confidence placed in her; indeed, she deserves to be immortalised quite as much as the famous hostess of Appenzell, and we would fain place a star, Bädeler fashion, against the name of her house, as a friendly intimation to all who come this way that they cannot do better than turn in thither.

The shore of the lake is swarming with foreigners, by whom on bright sunny days, when the wind is asleep, many are the demands made upon the boatmen for the hire of their fragile craft. But 'when the Mythenstein puts his hood on,' or the wind blows chill and cold, impatient visitors are doomed to hear, sometimes for days together, the oft-repeated and depressing words with which Schiller has made them so familiar, 'Don't go! There's a heavy storm coming up; you must wait!' At such times as these, however, they may console themselves by making a short expedition along the shore to the little village of Gersau. A thoroughly prosperous-looking place it is, and

it owes its well-being to the diligent use it has made of the gifts which Nature has so lavishly bestowed upon it. The soil upon which Gersau stands was formed by the two wild mountain-torrents, Riese and Rührli, which issue forth from ravines in the Rigi, and bring with them a quantity of earth and rubbish which they

have deposited upon the margin of the lake. But the luxuriant vegetation, which reminds one of the neighbourhood of Chiavenna, and has caused Gersau to be styled the Swiss Nice, owes its existence to the mild and genial, almost Italian, climate which prevails here. No winds are suffered to visit Gersau but the warm Föhn



THE MYTHENSTEIN.

and the south-east wind, for it is protected on the right by the rugged wall of rock called the Vitznauerstock, on the left by the Hochfluh, and in the rear by the precipices of the Rigi. Fig-trees will here live through the winter in the open air, and their fruit ripens in the summer, so it is no wonder that the beautiful chestnut

of Italy should thrive to perfection. Indeed, it has become quite naturalised all about the Lake of Lucerne, which, so tradition affirms, is owing to two Italians who spent a night, many, many years ago, in an inn at Horw, near Lucerne, and in the morning presented their obliging landlord with a few chestnuts which they

told him to plant in the ground. This he did, and the young trees thrived perfectly, grew to maturity, and rewarded the care of their owner by bearing fruit, greatly to his delight. In time a little grove of chestnuts grew up around the inn, which was thenceforward called the Chestnut-tree, and very soon there were chestnuts all about the lake.

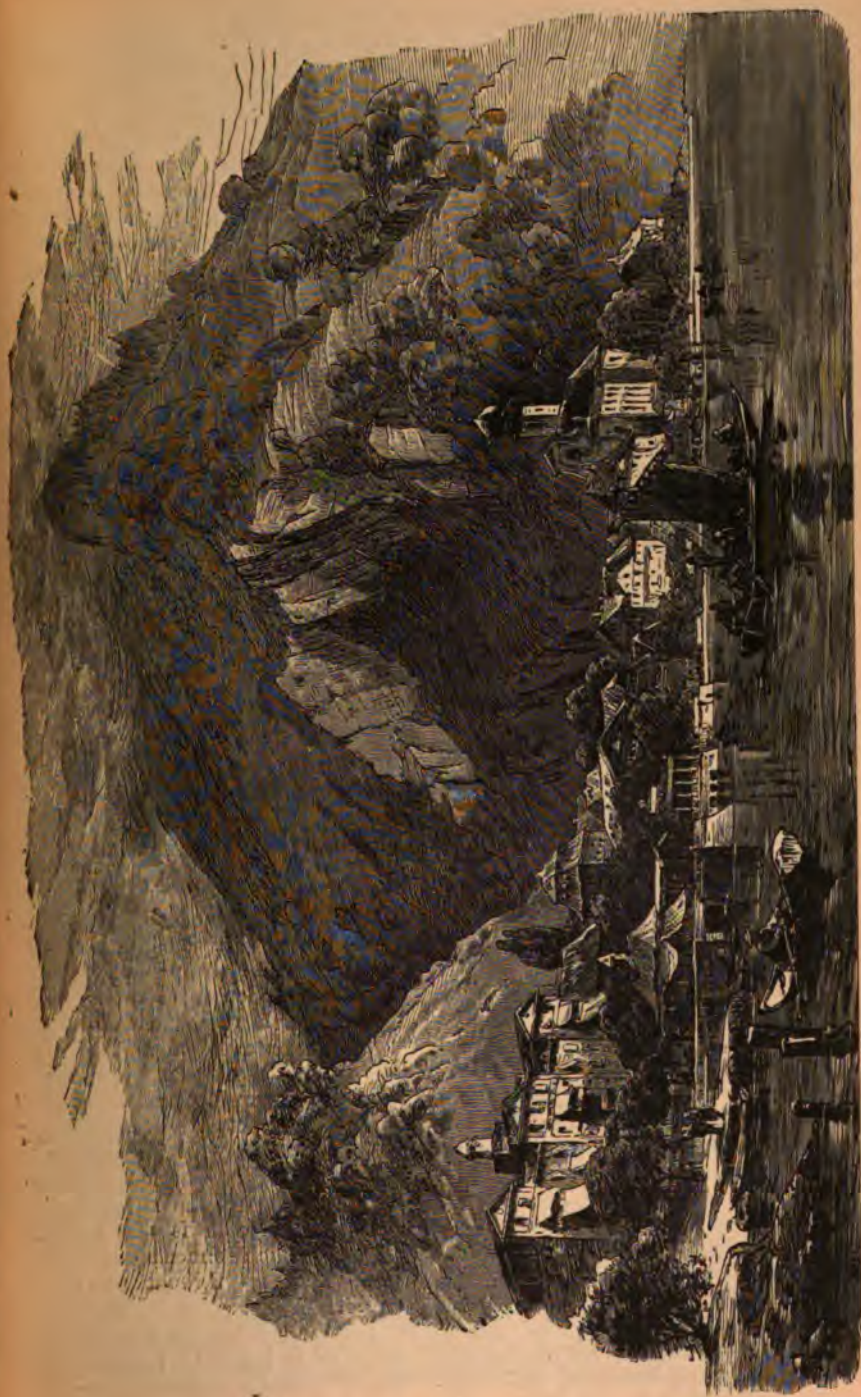
But about a century and a half ago, the industrious little place was yet further enriched by the invention of the spinning of floss-silk, a branch of industry which it still pursues, and from which it gains not merely a comfortable livelihood, but even wealth. Gersau is also interesting on several other accounts, the most important of which is, that from 1359 until the end of the last century it was an entirely independent free State. In those times it was not a little proud of being permitted to erect a tall conspicuous gallows, as a token of its independence and of its possessing its own criminal jurisdiction. The lions were all taken one by one, but no one paid any heed to the little bee in its nook on the lake, until the Man of Corsica came and forced it to yield its honey.

Another of its special features has long since ceased to exist, unfortunately for the artist, who might have found in it numerous subjects for his pencil. This was the singular institution called the 'Gaunerkilbi,' or Thieves' Festival, which was held here annually on the first Sunday after the Ascension. All the doubtful characters of the neighbourhood—beggars, gipsies, men, women, and children—streamed hither from all parts, to the number of several hundred, and formed a strange motley encampment in the meadows, where they feasted like a swarm of locusts. On the Mon-

day they appeared dressed in their very best, and gave themselves up to dancing, and more money changed hands in the course of the day than the wealthiest of the young peasants could afford to spend. On Tuesday they all hurried away, and soon after there was not a trace of them to be seen anywhere.

That Gersau should abound in charming walks is only what might be expected from its situation. There is a delightful path along the Riesebach to the Rothesfluh and the falls of the Röhrlibach, or to the chapel of the 'Kindlismord,' which is connected with a very dismal story. It seems that there was a wedding one day at the inn of Treib, which is still to be seen standing close to the margin of the lake, opposite Brunnen. The wedding was followed by dancing, and while the fiddler, who had come across the lake from Gersau, sat feasting and drinking within, his child lay starving in the boat outside, and had to go home at night with its father still hungry. When they reached the landing-place, however, the fiddler grew so furious with it for begging for food, that he dashed out its brains against a stone. Remorse then drove him from his home to take service in a foreign land; but the crime into which he had been betrayed by wine was brought to light by the same agency, for the man himself confessed it in a fit of intoxication. The chapel has been standing for the last three hundred years, and a cliff on the lake at Gersau, where one of the child's shoes came ashore, is still called the 'Red Shoe.'

Treib lies at the point of a promontory opposite Brunnen, where the lake, here called the Bay of Buocha, or Gersau, suddenly changes its course, and in-



GERSAU.

stead of running east and west, as heretofore, makes a great bend to north and south. From Brunnen to Flüelen it is called the Bay of Uri; and here the mountains reveal themselves in all their stupendous magnificence. There is a most romantic charm about the whole scene, which combines savage grandeur with sweet soft beauty, and abounds in variety of form and colour. The precipices along the shore are so steep that there is but just room for two villages at their base.

Those who wish to enjoy it all thoroughly will go up from Treib to Seelisberg, though by so doing they will miss the Lake of Seelisberg, which lies deep buried among wild masses of rock and pine-woods on the way from Beckenried to the Alpine village of Emmatten.

Far below us, at a giddy depth of some four thousand feet, gleams the green lake, while around us the mighty mountains rear their great heads on high. Yonder, most conspicuous of all, is the ice-crowned Uri-Rothstock, and beyond are the Niederbauen and the massive Bristen, while opposite, on the eastern side of the valley of the Reuss, stands the colossal Windgälle. We look straight down into the streets of Schwyz, and are almost on a level with the Mythen; Morschach, which is not visible from the lake, seems quite near us; and there is the Frohnalpstock, the village of Sisikon, and Tell's Chapel at the foot of the Axenberg, where hundreds come day by day to meditate upon the past. We can see from one end to the other of the beautifully-constructed Axen road, which runs to Altdorf along the eastern shore of the lake, close to the face of the cliff, or through tunnels pierced in its side. Immediately below Seelisberg lies

the old classic meadow of Rütli, the most sacred spot in Switzerland, and now national property.

All the dear old names seem to ring in our ears as we gaze upon it, and the grand scenery around inspires us with great thoughts. The moonlight night described with such poetic feeling by Schiller seems to live again before us. We hear the sound of the fireman's horn coming over to us from Seelisberg, and the clear tones of the little bell in the forest chapel in Schwyz, as it rings for matins; yonder are the boats now coming to shore; and the sun is shedding such a golden radiance upon the solitary rock there in the lake that the large letters upon its face glow golden too, and the great name of the poet is revealed in all becoming splendour. This rock is the Mythenstein, a natural obelisk, and the most beautiful Schiller memorial in the world, for it is hallowed by the touching gratitude of a plain and homely people. The monument happens to be placed in the very midst of the stage upon which that famous drama was enacted, which brought punishment to the arbitrary nobles and freedom to the enslaved people; for all the places which deserve mention from their connection with those times lie in the immediate neighbourhood of the lake. In old days the lake formed the grand means of communication between the outer world and the wild inaccessible places which lay buried in the lonely recesses of the mountains, just as the ocean is the grand highway which connects one land with another throughout the world.

For the last ten years or more, however, it has been possible to travel by land as well as by water; for a splendid high-road, called



GALLERY ON THE AXENSTRASSE.

the Axenstrasse, has been constructed, which, starting from Brunnen, runs boldly along and sometimes through the precipitous cliffs of the Lake of Uri, and at length joins the St. Gotthard road at Altdorf.

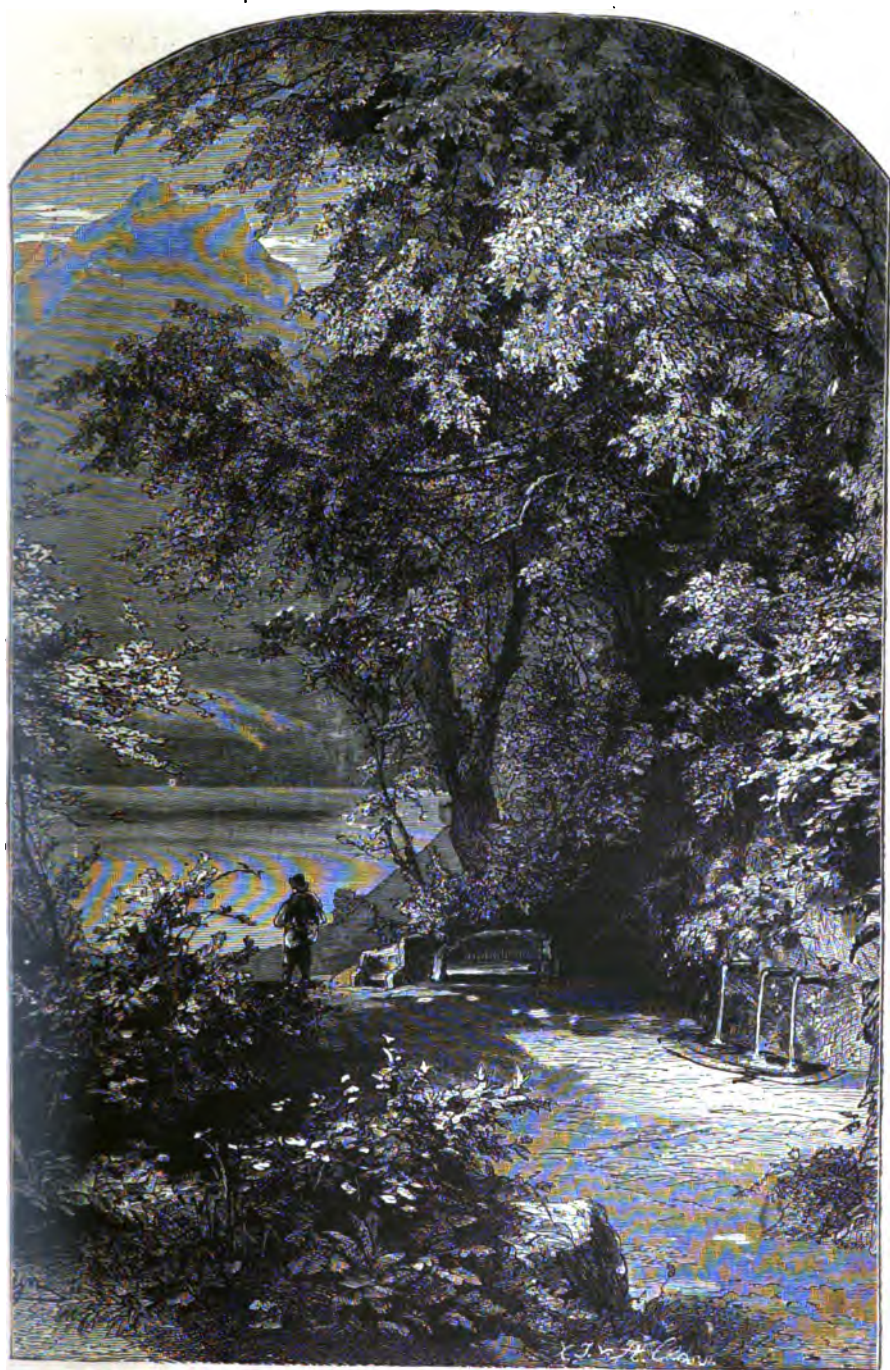
Such roads as these were considered in former days as appropriate work for demons, but altogether beyond the powers of human beings; whereas now, thanks to that pioneer of civilisation, the engineer, a tunnel through the rock, perhaps three or four miles long, is no longer looked upon as a marvel.

The Axen road is named after the Axenberg, a mountain which rises to the north of Flüelen, along and through and at the foot of which this famous highway runs. Foreign engineers admire the masterly manner in which the costly and arduous task has been executed; while tourists, such as ourselves, are enchanted with the wild beauty of the panorama unfolded before us in never-ending variety at every step, and the artist finds subjects innumerable for his pencil. Throughout almost its whole course the road runs close above the surface of the lake; for it is cut in the face of the mountains, which rise so perpendicularly from the water as rarely to leave any margin whatever. Often we look through the dark tops of pine-trees directly down upon the still blue waters, and see the fissured cliffs of the western shore rising at apparently a very little distance from us. Then we enter one of the shady galleries which have been formed by the blasting of the rock, and see a stream of light pouring in upon us from the new landscape at the other end. Once only does the road leave the steep side of the rock, and that is where a stream from the valley of Riemenstald has forced its way

through, and has thrown up a little mound of earth upon which stands the small village of Sisikon, in a grove of walnut and chestnut trees. After passing Sisikon the precipices again approach the water's edge, and the road is again shut in by a wall of rock. Here, just below it, and half buried in foliage, stands the far-famed Tell's Chapel, which may be approached by a foot-path leading down to it from the Axenstrasse. Refreshments may be obtained in the hotel called Zur Tellaplatte, and after partaking of them we may feel sufficiently fortified to enter the great tunnel of the Axenberg. A short distance farther on the road comes down to the lake, and we reach Flüelen, a pleasant cheerful-looking village, and the port of the canton of Uri. The soil here is formed by the alluvial deposits of the river Reuss. Yonder dark-wooded mountains enclose the valley of the Reuss; and mighty giants they are, the most conspicuous of all being the conical peak of the Bristenstock.

In the summer Flüelen is full of life and bustle; steamers are coming and going every hour, bringing and taking away passengers of all nations. Travellers bound for Italy can here take the diligence or private carriages, of which there are always plenty to be had. The Italian element indeed begins to be conspicuous here in the persons of the *voituriers*, or coachmen, who are quite as eager for gain as, and better versed in the art of persuasion than, their Swiss colleagues. Arrangements may here be made for proceeding to Wasen, Andermatt, the Furka Pass, Rhone Glacier, Pass of the St. Gotthard, Airolo, and farther still.

Those who do not care to walk along the dusty road which leads hence to Altdorf will find omni-



buses belonging to some half-dozen hotels waiting for them on the shore of the lake, from which they will readily conclude that more and more interest is taken in the place which, more than all others, is connected with the traditions of William Tell.

It was at Altdorf that the hat was raised upon the pole; at Altdorf that the famous arrow was shot from the cross-bow, the story of which will be told by all future generations; at Altdorf Tell was born; and in the immediate neighbourhood stands the castle which belonged to those friends of the people, the lords of Attinghausen. But it is a mistake to suppose that we shall find any special memorials of Tell at Altdorf; there is no monument worthy of the man or the deed, and neither the figures surmounting the stone fountain, nor the misshapen colossal plaster statue, nor the wonderful frescoes on the ancient tower, are any of them worth half as much as the homely little rhyme which the traveller reads with a smile near the middle of the bridge called the Kapell-brücke at Lucerne:

'William Tell he scorned the hat.
To death was he condemned for that,
Unless an apple on the spot
From his own child's head he shot.'

But William Tell's best monument is the constant remembrance in which his name is held by old and young.

In Altdorf itself nothing has survived from his times save the everlasting and unchangeable mountains, the sacred forest on the Grünwaldberg, and the rushing roaring Schächen. It has suffered severely from fire more than once since the fifteenth century, the worst conflagration having taken place in the last year of

the last century, since which time it has been almost entirely rebuilt, and in far grander style. When seen beneath the bright summer sun, this, the capital of the canton of Uri, looks a peaceful, prosperous, and even cheerful place, with its trim little flower-gardens and luxuriant meadows. What may be concealed behind this external brightness is another matter.

The parish church, which stands among gardens and nut-trees on the mountain-side, is a grand-looking building, and its sacristy contains a good many costly offerings in the shape of chalices and vestments, dating from the times when the men of Altdorf, and indeed of Uri in general, were bitten with a fancy for taking service in foreign lands. Not far from the church, and keeping guard over it, as it were, stand a monastery belonging to the Capuchins and a convent.

If we stroll through the outskirts of Altdorf, or on to Bürglen and Attinghausen, we may enjoy the great and wondrous beauty of Nature to our heart's content. When we behold her enthroned among the sublime mountains, she looks like some mighty and august queen; but when we see her in the fields, in the flowery meadows and fruitful orchards, she descends from her pedestal and becomes the tender kindly mother, whom we are fain to address in some such words as these:

'Thrilled with thy beauty and love in
the wooded slope of the mountain,
Here, great mother, I lie, thy child,
with his head on thy bosom!
Into my being thou murrestest joy,
and tenderest sadness
Shedd'st thou, like dew, on my heart,
till the joy and the heavenly sadness
Pour themselves forth from my heart in
tears and the hymn of thanksgiving.'

COLERIDGE.

(To be continued.)



ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH IN ALTDORF.

THE WINES OF HEALTH.

'WHAT is the matter with you to-day? You look out of sorts,' inquired a septuagenarian friend.

'Only a little feverish—caught cold; so I have been taking ever so many bottles of sulphate of quinine, until I am as deaf as people who won't hear.'

'Sulphate of quinine, indeed! Save that for another time, and take a bottle of good old Bordeaux. We roast a turkey to-morrow. Come and dine.'

Having confidence in his seventy-odd years' experience, I accepted the invitation, and agreed to try the prescription—at least, in part. My readers may be satisfied to learn that no evil results were the consequence. Which fact is nothing wonderful.

For, be it noted in your private agenda, the wines of Bordeaux, as compared with all others in respect to wholesomeness, are more highly esteemed in France even than they are in England. Champagne, and white wines in general, used habitually (with a few exceptions to be hereafter noted), are held to be bad for the nerves; Burgundy idem for the head; but of good, sound, old Bordeaux, drink as much as ever you will, it can (theoretically) do you no harm. That wine, or rather those wines, known in England as Clarets, are endowed with as many virtues as aurum potable or the alchemists' elixir of life. They make old men young, and strengthen young men with two-man vigour. They cure the ailing, and improve the healthy; they soften angry passions, bright-

en up dull care, sweeten sour tempers, restore failing appetite, and insure digestion when appetite is satisfied. It is they, and not the total temperance teapot, who fill the cup or glass which cheers, but not inebriates—if people will be but wise as well as merry; and, as Horace asked, 'Why dies the man whose garden gives him Sage?' so a true-born Girondin will wonder how anything so unpleasant can occur to the worthy whose cellar is well stored with 'Vins de Bordeaux.'

Of course, in all those districts of France where grapes ripen sufficiently to make palatable wine, that wine is there the habitual beverage, even for working people, because, to give one reason, it is cheaper than beer; but, in departments which produce no wine, and in all cases for choice wine to set before guests, Bordeaux (genuine or supposititious) largely enjoys the preference—an influential cause being that it bears travelling (especially by sea) better than Burgundy. Prejudice even goes so far as to say that Burgundy wines, bottled in the interior and brought to the coast, suffer from the injurious neighbourhood of the sea. I have never been able to get an explanation how sea-air can influence wine in bottles; but certain it is that, whether through fear of loss or through restricted demand, French wine-merchants residing on the coast keep their stocks of Burgundies comparatively low.

And here we have an example of the widely different treatments

judged expedient for different growths of wine. Madeira, for the benefit of its health, is made to take a voyage to the Indies and back; while Burgundy, for fear of sea-sickness, is forbidden even to cross the Channel. To taste Burgundy to perfection, you must not only go to France to drink it, but must drink it at a sufficient distance inland to be out of the reach of every maritime whiff of wind.

That red wines in general should be more wholesome than most white or yellow wines may be explained by their respective modes of manufacture. Some white wines are made from black grapes, by pressing them immediately after they are gathered, before the skin has had time to decompose and colour the juice, which juice is fermented as soon as drawn off. Such white wine, therefore, contains nothing but what is contained in the pulp of the berry, together with the alcohol evolved from the sugar therein, to the exclusion of those elements which are peculiar to the pips, the skin, and the stalk of the grapes. It is, in fact, only an incomplete beverage, almost equivalent to beer without hops. Now, in all pure and unadulterated red wines, the colouring matter is the skin of the grape. A very dark variety of black grape, called the *Teinturier*, the *Dyer*, is grown for the express purpose of deepening the colour of wines likely to be deficient in that quality. When the fruit for red-wine-making is gathered, it is not immediately pressed, but is thrown into an enormous vat, where the grapes, partially crushed, are left—pulp, stalks, skins, and all—until fermentation has reached a certain point. They are then finally pressed, still all together. The liquor drawn off, further fer-

mented and duly fined, becomes red wine.

It will be evident that, in consequence of this simultaneous fermentation of the stalk, the skin, and the pulp of the grape together, all genuine red wines contain divers medicinal elements supplied by the vine-plant, which must have their effect on the human system, according to the place of growth, its soil and climate, and the varieties of grape used in making the wine—and also according to the constitution of each individual drinker. For instance, the first-rate wines of *Médoc* contain, besides free acids and vegetable and mineral salts, tartaric, malic, acetic, and ceanothic acids. The salts are, bitartrate of potash, tartrate of lime, tartrate of aluminium, and tartrate of iron. They carry from seventeen to eighteen hundredths of tannin, and from thirty-four to thirty-five hundredths of colouring matter. The maximum of alcohol contained is from 8.50 to 9.25 per cent.

A remarkable fact connected with wines is, that certain world-famous vintages are obtained from localities which ordinary observers would pronounce, at first sight, to be little likely to produce them; while other spots, equally or apparently more favoured by circumstances, supply either nothing at all or very little indeed to the general wine-harvest of the country, and that little of such a quality as to be never mentioned or publicly acknowledged. It disappears by consumption at home, or it is absorbed by admixture with, and falsification of, other wines, which procure its admittance into unsuspecting households under a style and title to which it has no right.

The tourist who has sipped delicious Rhine wine in the midst

of its numerous picturesque birth-places, gratifying at the same time his eyes and his palate, or who has washed down the game and the fruits of Burgundy, with its rose-scented, ruby-tinted, native beverage, within sight of the long range of hills which give to the department its name of Côte d'Or, the Golden Slope, will naturally associate superior wines with rocky declivities fully facing the sun. What will be his surprise on approaching Bordeaux, and still more on proceeding further on, to traverse the far-famed plain of Médoc! He will behold a tract of land which, without being aware of accomplished facts, he would pronounce to be moderate or indifferent (when it was not absolutely bad) for agricultural purposes, fair (in spring) but never first-rate for pasturage. And yet here, on these unpromising flats, which lie between the river Garonne and the sea, are grown the so-called 'Clarets,' for the cream of which the capital cities of the world try to outbid each other, and of which (second, third, fourth, or fifth qualities) a greater quantity is handed over to commerce than the most abundant years can produce within the stated limits. In France alone, at least one hundred times as much Château Lafitte claret is drunk as the whole estate yields annually. Where do the false ninety-nine bottles come from? Where, O where, do they spring from the ground? Are the vines that produce them to be reckoned amongst the flowers that are born to blush unseen? At least, their sweetness, instead of being wasted on the desert, finds its way, with approval, to the busy haunts of men.

As the vines are trained in low parallel horizontal cordons instead of being supported, as elsewhere,

on upright stakes (*échalas*), when they are in leaf the Médoc presents the pleasant aspect of a sea of verdure, deliciously scented in early summer with the mignonette-like perfume of the blossoms, bounded only by a distant horizon, in which, interspersed with handsome clumps of trees, the various and sundry Châteaux—Margaux, Palmer, Lafitte, and the rest, which give their names to the costly wines grown within their precincts—stand up here and there like rocky islets emerging from an archipelago of green.

But perhaps, you think, the richness of the soil makes up for the flatness of the aspect? Not at all; and so much the better. Because wine-producing vines give unsatisfactory results in fat fertile land. Still less can they support manure, which spoils or destroys their special aroma. The only fertiliser applied to the best Bordeaux vineyards is the leaf-mould obtained from the decayed summer thinnings of the branches or the ashes of the burnt twigs that have been pruned away in winter. The same rule holds in the choicest *Clos* of Burgundy. When the rain has washed down the vegetable mould from the top of the rocky hills to the bottom, men and women carry it in baskets on their backs once more up to the top again. Human muscle repairs the effects of the force of gravity, and that is all. Mr. Rimmel would as soon admit ill-savoured plants into his perfume laboratory as a good *vigneron* would allow rank manure to enter his vineyard.

It is easy to judge for yourself what the soil is. The horizontal cordons are mostly planted at such a distance that a pair of oxen can horse-hoe (excuse the bull) between them. Follow the horse-hoe, and see what it turns up; bits of quartz, agates, and other

torrent-ground or sea-worn pebbles (some of them pretty enough to be polished and set in buttons, brooches, and bracelets), mingled in large proportion with hungry heath-mould containing perhaps a small admixture of alluvium in varying amount, but with the poverty-struck common-like quality visibly perceptible. In fact, many good vineyards really are reclaimed commons or *landes*, and there are places where six inches separate the cultivated vineyard from the uncultivated *lande*.

Even close to vineyards of high reputation there is no lack of uncultivated spots, perfumed and brightened-up by the blossoms of heath and furze, interminged with shabby pines and sundry stunted, thorny, crabbed shrubs. Hence not a few of the villagers eke out their profits by very general bee-keeping, which everywhere flourishes most where there is an abundant succession of *wild* flowers. The statistics of the Médoc will give you in such a parish so many hives at full work. Now profitable bee-keeping is no proof of the goodness of soils, but the reverse. Agricultural prosperity may be assumed to exist almost in inverse proportion to apicultural prosperity. Bees must have a floral wilderness to fall back on when cultivated plants are out of bloom. The vine-blossoms yield delicious honey for those whose stomachs acknowledge any honey to be delicious—Heaven defend the hungry tourist from the irrepressible honey-pots of Switzerland! But when once the young grapes are set, if the bees had not heather and other wild flowers in reserve, their commons would be short indeed.

To viticulture and apiculture many parishes add the growing of early peas and other vegetables for the Bordeaux markets, besides

strawberries, grapes for dessert, cherries, figs, and peaches, which last are produced on standard trees starting up here and there without order or arrangement, as if they had sprung up self-sown or by accident on the spot, which supposition is more than probable. But market-gardeners are well aware that light naturally-hungry soils, when enriched by manure, cultivated with intelligence, and favoured by a mild climate (or even in spite of a rude one), will produce the first vegetables and fruits of the season, although they would be comparatively worthless for agricultural purposes. Witness the environs of St. Pierre near Calais, Rosendael near Dunkerque, Roscoff in Brittany, besides numerous localities in Belgium and Holland. In our own country Great Yarmouth is famous for asparagus, and Cornwall for broccoli and early potatoes.

Most people have tasted a pleasant white wine known as Vin de Grave, a branch of the Bordeaux vintages which merits a few words to itself. In local language *Grave* and *Graves* (better employed in the plural) mean soils composed of gravel, sands, coarse and fine of different quality, combined with a little argillaceous earth, which are extremely propitious to the vine in respect to the quality of the wine obtained from it. For, be it specially noted, the finest, handsomest, and best-flavoured grapes for dessert are far from being the best for wine-making. For instance, the variety called the Chalosse is a robust vine, bearing enormous grapes, and producing so abundantly that it would be in great request if its wine were not weak, colourless, and deficient in body; but it would supply most saleable bunches for Covent-garden Market. As it is, small proprietors

are the only persons who dare plant it, because all they want is to increase their number of hogsheads. Viticulturists of the first class, who only grow expensive wines for export, are compelled to banish the Chalosse from their vineyards. The Mausein also is almost completely banished from the Médoc, because it ripens too soon (a valuable quality for greenhouse culture in England) to enter into the composition of Claret. It is rotten before the other grapes are ripe. Its berries, oval and middle-sized, very sweet and well-flavoured, are in great request for the table. All these are desirable properties for us at home, to whom it signifies little that wine from the Mausein does not correspond to the excellence of its grapes; that it is light, weak, colourless, and bodiless, proving that sugar alone will not make good wine. So enticing is the fruit of the Mausein, that it is obliged to be guarded from epicurean pilferers. Light sands suit it well, and it thrives therein better than any other variety. 'It thrives and fruits well in light sand!' English and Scotch gardeners will incredulously exclaim. But they may remember that sand can be rich as well as light, and that there may possibly be more things in continental grape-growing than are dreamt of in their philosophy.

Space forbids my particularising the different varieties of grape grown about Bordeaux alone, much less those cultivated in other localities of France, and still less those held in estimation for table use in Spain, Italy, and other parts of Southern Europe. But I have often thought that our leading horticulturists, instead of raising new seedling and hybrid varieties of dessert grapes at home—the majority of which, after be-

ing sent out to the public at high prices, notoriously turn out lamentable failures—would do well to make extensive continental tours during the season that grapes are ripe. It would be a less expensive and more agreeable speculation than the sending out of botanical collectors to explore savage lands, with the chance of being burnt up by fevers, killed by wild beasts, or devoured by cannibals. The search after grapes unknown in England would be sure to be rewarded by welcome acquisitions. And when once obtained, no hot-house gardeners in the world are more capable of cultivating valuable sorts than the horticulturists of the United Kingdom.

True Médoc Claret is composed mainly, if not entirely, of six leading varieties of grape, or *cépages*, which, and their sub-varieties, are described in viticultural treatises published at Bordeaux. Such treatises (as well as those on the wine-grapes of Burgundy) ought to be studied by colonists whose climate allows them to take up wine-making with fair hopes of commercial success. But the higher the class of Bordeaux wine, the fewer the varieties of grape employed. The highest are extracted from as few as two sorts of grape only. The best Clarets are made almost exclusively from the Carmenet or Petite-Vidure and the Carmenere or Grosse-Vidure grapes. A vine-owner who wishes to maintain the repute of his wines will make two or three gatherings. In general, the first batch will prove the best. The bunches hanging on the vines will be carefully selected, cutting only those that have been well exposed to the sun and whose berries are equal in size and colour. Bunches ripened at the base of the vine

will have the preference, while all green or decayed berries will be thrown away. For some wines, a certain proportion of the grape-stalks are rejected. These rules are followed with such minuteness that in certain communes the vintage lasts full two months. It is evident that wines produced with so much long-continued trouble cannot be sold for low prices.

A great merit of most Bordeaux white wines, including the Vins de Grave, is that they are made entirely from white grapes and treated in the same way as red wines are, only perhaps with somewhat less care, and that they therefore possess the corresponding merits of red wines. No less than seven varieties of white grape are grown to furnish the best qualities of Sauternes, while four others help to supply an abundant quantity of ordinaires. The Vins de Grave exhibit still more frequently the yellow tint which is an indication of their wholesomeness. They bear a close resemblance to the Rhenish family. Now the wines of the Rhine and the Moselle are found by many persons to be particularly agreeable and restorative on recovering from a fit of illness. It is worth mentioning that there are also red Vins de Grave, although they are little known to commerce as such.

On the other side of Bordeaux, proceeding south in the direction of Bayonne, you find the same natural sterility, and by and by worse. The very first station, Pessac, takes its name from a straggling parish lying to the right of the railway, and possessing in the lowest parts a heavy soil, besides a certain extent of gravelly ground suited to the culture of the vine, and sands fit for little else but rye; but more than three-

fifths of the parish are *landes*. Just beyond Pessac, to the left, is 'Pope Clement's vineyard,' once the ancestral property of Bertrand de Goth, who was Archbishop of Bordeaux at the time when, being elected Pope, he took the title of Clement V. He bequeathed that vineyard to his successors in the archbishopric, in whose hands it remained until the first French Revolution, when it was sold as national property. But so great was its reputation, that its present owner had to bring an action at law against his neighbours, to prevent their calling their wine 'Pope Clement's wine.'

Travelling onwards, nothing is seen but the natural and proverbial barrenness of the *Landes*, which is so conspicuous and striking as to have given their name to the department of France in which they are situated. At first sight the continued existence of this vast desert plain seems hard to account for. True, there are considerable difficulties of drainage and subsoil to be grappled with; but the admirable climate still remains. It looks as if it were a desert for want both of tillage and of fertilisers, which is certainly one cause of the poverty of the soil. It is hardly a paradox to say that because the *Landes* are thinly inhabited they cannot support a thick population.

Poorness of soil, then, is no invincible obstacle to wine-growing, while sunshine is indispensable. Nevertheless, between Bordeaux and Bayonne, although the warmth of the summer and the mildness of the winter are evidenced by healthy cork-trees, arbutuses, and other indicators of climate, the absence of vineyards strikes the traveller. Circumstances seem to invite their cultivation, and yet they are not cultivated. Dessert grapes may be

grown in sheltered gardens, but the vine adds little to the saleable produce, and consequently to the wealth, of the district. It is difficult for passing observers to say whether this is owing to insurmountable natural impediments or to prejudice and want of enterprise in the inhabitants, who will grow only what their grandfathers grew before them, and so on from generation to generation. The favourite plant with the aborigines of that part of Gascony seems to be capsicum, red pepper, or pimento, which is eaten during summer, cooked and raw, in every stage of colour from green to scarlet, and is stored after drying in enormous quantities for winter use. As to the gales and gusts of wind which sweep in from the Bay of Biscay, they might be sufficiently broken by planting belts of trees.

Still further on, the vine again comes to the front. The extreme south of France—the foot of the Pyrenees and the borders of the Mediterranean—produces many excellent and wholesome wines, some of which, as Lunel, Frontignan, and Rivesaltes, are known to the world, while others are not. The prosperous town of Certe enjoys the reputation of being able to make and supply, by judicious manipulation of French and Spanish wines, every sort of wine that heart can desire. Not that I have actually tasted all the different wines sent out from Certe; but this I do know, that Certe Madeira is capital. Amongst unknown wines are those of the Oriental Pyrenees, with the exception of Collioure, which enjoys amongst connoisseurs a certain reputation as a *vin de liqueur*. Years ago a detestable mixture, called Roussillon, was sold in England, but it was a very unworthy substitute for genuine Roussillon.

Good Oriental-Pyrenean wine

might be imported advantageously into London, especially for those who like port-wine, but whose purse forbids its frequent use. The wines of Vinça and Rigarda, for instance, are sound and sufficiently full-bodied to travel and keep without brandying. If you wish to reserve them up to a very old age, you have only to stir a couple of quarts of good cognac into a cask containing three hundred and fifty bottles, as soon as it reaches you. So supported, it will keep for ever and a day. These wines are sold on the spot, not by casks, but by measurement at so much the litre—say 4*d.* or 5*d.* per litre for very good qualities of a preceding year. You get your cask made by a cooper, and then the wine is measured into it by a sworn public measurer. To give some idea of Vinça's and Rigarda's position in the scale of wines, a merchant, after tasting some, said, 'We cannot make Bordeaux with this, but we could make first-rate Burgundy.' Surely those wines deserve to receive the attention of London buyers, especially since a railway has recently been opened through that part of the Oriental Pyrenees.

All the grand and high-class Bordeaux wines are known and honoured by the name of their *crú*, or place of growth; as Fronsac, Château-Latour, Léoville, and others, *quos dicere longum est*, and which to recite would tax the most retentive memories. Of white wines, as Barsac and Sauterne, there are first *crús* and second *crús*; possibly also third and fourth *crús*. To red wines below a certain price, the merchants (perhaps not knowing it) do not deign to give any name whereby to certify their birthplace, but call them *Côtes*, 'uplands'—and there are *Premières Côtes*—or *Palus*, 'lowlands,' as the case may be;

Palus is a local word, of Latin origin, applied to moist or marshy ground or the borders of streams, favourable to agriculture, and also to viticulture, as far as quantity is concerned, but from which 'grand wine' is never obtainable.

Bordeaux wines were not always the fashion, even in France. Henri IV. preferred Jurançon, the heady Pyreneean white wine with which his lips were moistened (with the addition of garlic) as soon as he was born. Louis XIII., afflicted with a weak stomach, was forcibly all but an abstainer. Louis XIV. took kindly to Chambertin and other burgundies, tossing them off in bumper-fulls; in his old age, his doctor confined him to Nuits, still a generous burgundy. With the Regent's suppers came the reign of sparkling Champagne. Louis XV., standing in need of wine at the same time delicate and tonic, was persuaded by Richelieu to try bordeaux, and thereby brought it into public favour.

According to the *Mémoires de la Marquise de Créquy*, the King one day said to Richelieu, 'Monsieur le Gouverneur de Septimanie, Aquitaine, and Novempopulanie, just tell me one thing: do they make drinkable wine in the Bordelais?' 'Sire, there are *crûs* whose wine is not to be despised.' 'What do you mean by that?' 'There is what they call the white of Sauternes, not so good by a long way off as Montrachet, nor as that of the low Burgundian hills, but which, nevertheless, is not exactly small beer. There is also a certain *vin de Graves*, which smells of gun-flints like an old carabine, and resembles Moselle, but keeps better. They have also in the Médoc, and especially in the Bazadais, two or three sorts of red wine of which the Gascons boast enough to make you die of

laughing. If you believe them, it is the very best drink on earth—nectar fit for the gods. It is not Upper Burgundy nor yet Rhône wine, most assuredly. It is neither very generous nor very vigorous; but for all that, *il y a du bouquet pas mal, et puis je ne sais quelle sorte de mordant sombre et sournois*, which is far from disagreeable.'

And so, to satisfy the King's curiosity, M. de Richelieu had some Château-Lafitte wine sent to Versailles. Majesty pronounced it to be passable.

In the present year of grace, I am offered 'fifty-nine and 'sixty-one Château-Lafitte, in cases of twenty-five bottles and upwards, at eleven francs the bottle, plus carriage and duty.

The higher the quality of Bordeaux wines, the longer they require to be kept in the wood before bottling. Three years is the shortest time that wine with any pretensions remains in cask. Quite aristocratic wines remain longer in the barrel, the time varying with the *crû* (the technical name for the produce of each special locality: *vin du crû* is home-grown wine) and with the vintage, that is, the year. Generally speaking, Claret should be kept in the wood until it has ceased to deposit any precipitate or colouring matter; so that when bottled it should form no crust, even after several years. Consequently, when your host, or the waiter at your hotel, triumphantly places on the table a bottle of fine old crusted St. Julian, Château-Lafitte, or other Claret, he does so in ignorance either that it is not genuine unmixed Claret at all, or that, if of pure native growth, it has been put in bottle much too soon. It may be very pleasant and wholesome wine, but it is not what he takes it to be. Its

supposed merit is really a defect. His justifiable boast would be to offer you Claret which, unquestionably old in bottle, betrays not the slightest trace of crust, but is equally translucent to the light in whichever direction you turn it round.

But to keep wine for so long a period in cask it requires to be what is called *nourri*, nourished, fed. That is, as fast as an empty space is formed by waste or evaporation between the bung and the surface of the wine, it has to be continually filled up from time to time with wine of as nearly the same quality as possible. If brandy is added, for the strengthening of inferior wines, it should be done at the very first. High-class wines scorn the mere mention of brandy, and would indignantly disclaim any knowledge of, or acquaintance with, so vulgar and deleterious a liquid. Nevertheless, Bordeaux growers and merchants are fond of brandying Clarets intended for consumption in the United Kingdom, and probably in other northern countries also, in order to help them to support the journey and please what are presumed to be British tastes.

This feeding of wines in cask is a task which demands unrelenting care and attention, besides some knowledge and experience of the ways and doings, the constitution and habits, often the waywardness, of the particular wine intended to be nursed into maturity. Consequently it is best performed by professional persons. I would hardly advise unpractised northern amateurs to buy new wine, however promising, with the intention of managing it themselves until it is fit to bottle. Their safest plan is to order from some trustworthy merchant or grower wine in cask which has been by him duly kept, fed, and fined, so as to be perfect-

ly ready to bottle after the repose of a month or so at its journey's end. This mode of stocking a cellar is strongly to be recommended, both for its economy and its certainty of success. All risk is thus avoided, and you escape the annoyance of suspecting that your correspondent has supplied you with bad wine, when the real fault lies in your own bad management.

True, in most wine-growing countries there are amateurs who do undertake the trouble; but then they make and manage wine by hereditary instinct. They imbibe the knowledge with their mother's milk, and they hear little else talked about, except the village gossip, from the moment they are old enough to understand spoken language. Tradition tells them how, when, and why to *soutirer*, or draw off wine from one cask to another, when to let it alone, and all the rest of viticultural lore.

Besides the people who grow the vine professionally, to make a livelihood, often a fortune, out of the juice of the grape, there are in France many and many a *real-tier*, many a professional gentleman, or even lady, who cultivate a small vineyard for amusement, as we cultivate a greenhouse or a garden, and adopt wine-making for their hobby just as others take to turning, bullock-fattening, or poultry-exhibiting. To the one it supplies a healthy and not useless occupation; to the others it affords a profitable relaxation in the intervals of more serious employments. In the words of one of my intimate acquaintance, a lawyer, a medical man, a draper, inherits or acquires a patch of stony ground open to the south, which already is, or is soon to be, promoted to the dignity of 'Ma Vigne.' The happy proprietor

forgets his flowers of forensic rhetoric while sniffing the perfume of his vines in blossom; prunes redundant shoots when tired of amputating limbs; decides the suitable length of his vine-stakes after handling linen and the *mètre* measure. All sell the wine they do not consume at home with even greater delight than they yield to purchasers the extra produce of their gun or their garden. They prefer a set of private customers to letting their wares go to wine-merchants, for one good reason—they get a better price. But the amusement of the whole affair, from the beginning to the end, is the great inducement to its pursuit. The watching and the ‘feeding’ of the wine in casks affords continual interest. The tasting is an effort of critical acumen.

If the reader follows my advice to import his own claret in cask, or to purchase it in the wood in England of some house in which he can place confidence, his only care will be to see it well bottled, after it has become perfectly clear and bright by a month’s or six weeks’ rest, secure from frost, in a cool place that is free from bad smells, stable emanations, and draughts of air. A warehouse on the ground-floor is the most convenient, as well as most in accordance with the Bordeaux practice, on account of the daylight admitted, and also, for the bottler’s sake, of the temperature less chilly than that of an underground cellar. If, by accidental mishap, the wine when tapped is not perfectly bright, you will beat the broken shells and whites of six or eight eggs with a little wine, boldly stir all together in the cask with a stick reaching to the bottom, and let it stand another six weeks. At the end of that time it ought to be as brilliant as can be wished.

Good wine can easily be spoiled by bad bottling; consequently that operation is of sufficient importance to need considerate preparation and efficient performance. Your wine having become irreproachably transparent, take advantage of cold weather, if you can. At all times of the year it is desirable to avoid stormy weather, and winds blowing from the south and the west. The bottles should have been most carefully rinsed, for the slightest negligence in this particular may cause vexatious consequences. When a bottle of wine, on opening it, is found to be what is called ‘corked,’ nine times out of ten the fault does not lie in the cork at all. The musty taste, which spoils the wine, is communicated by mouldiness growing on crust deposited by the previous contents of the bottle, or on bits of old cork left inside, which have not been removed by sufficient rinsings.

Shot or small nails are usually employed in this operation, but are far from suitable for the purpose. A shot or a nail often remains fixed between the side of the bottle and the internal swelling at the bottom. The lead which thus remains in contact with the wine may, in certain cases, become a source of real poisoning. The iron of the nails is not injurious to health, but it spoils the colour of red wines, and blackens white wines. It is therefore much more prudent to employ coarse river-gravel, which cleans the bottles perfectly, and a few grains of which, if left in the bottle, produce no inconvenience. In order that bottles may pile well, they ought, as far as possible, to be of the same size and shape. In families that have been long at house-keeping, and have a large stock of old bottles, this uniformity is difficult to insure. If, however, the

bottles are of different sorts, they must be ranged in classes of the same dimensions. The choice of corks, too, is extremely important.

Some corks are very porous, and although they stop the bottle well in appearance, they allow the wine to ooze out or evaporate. Hard and dry corks have also the same effect. Economy in corks is a great mistake. The very best corks are the cheapest in the end. Many a bottle of good wine is spoilt by a bad cork. Never, above all, for the sake of a small saving, employ corks that have been used before, even if only partially pierced by the corkscrew. On the contrary, do not hesitate to pay a fair price for first-rate new corks, namely, those which are fine-grained, soft, yielding to the finger, elastic, velvety, and showing the fewest pores possible.

To insert the cock, you tap the cask about an inch and a half above the rim. As soon as a few drops of the liquid begin to issue, you withdraw the augur, and drive in the cock by hand, avoiding any shock which might disturb the lees. As you cannot always manage that, it is a good plan to put the tap in its place the day before bottling the wine. Beneath it you set a salad-bowl or basin to catch the wine which escapes when the cock is not turned back in time, and which runs over when a bottle is filled too full. The bottle applied to the tap to be filled ought to be held in a slanting position, to prevent the wine from forming a froth, which would hinder its being properly filled. The bottles should be perfectly corked as fast as they are filled. The cork is driven in by hand with the bat, or forced down with the corking-machine (of which there are several), till it projects only a quarter of an inch, or less.

When the wine nearly ceases

to flow by the tap the cask is tilted behind, and kept in a position sloping forwards by means of a wooden wedge. The operation must be done steadily, and without shaking, to avoid disturbing the lees. But after the cask is once tilted, the wine left in it must be drawn immediately, whether it be clear or thick. The bottles of thick wine should be set on one side, upright, to settle, when they may be decanted into other bottles, and definitely corked.

For the lower stratum or bed on the cellar-floor, on which bottled wine is to be stacked, some use sawdust, which is bad. It harbours insects, which may gnaw the corks and prove a nuisance; it engenders mouldiness, and finally decays. River-sand or well-washed sea-sand makes the best layer to serve as a foundation for your pile of bottles. After levelling the sand you place the first row and stratum of bottles side by side, leaving an interval of half an inch between each bottle; and as they ought to lie quite horizontally, their necks are raised by placing laths beneath them. Then you place a lath upon the necks and another lath on the bottles of the first row; and you then place the second row of bottles in an opposite direction to the first, that is, with the necks of the upper row corresponding to the bottoms of the under one. The pile ought scarcely to be built to a greater height than three feet, unless the bottles are very strong, and exactly similar in size and shape. But stacking bottled wine is a work of great nicety, and is best performed by a practised hand. Unless well balanced and carefully adjusted, the whole pile is apt to come down with a run, exactly like a house of cards. In towns the catastrophe might be easily brought about by the vibration initiated by the pass-

age of heavy-laden carriages in the street.

The corks of choice wine intended to be kept may be covered with resin, to prevent them from moulding and from being eaten by the insects, with which many cellars abound. An excellent preparation for sealing bottles is, two pounds of resin mixed with a quarter of a pound of yellow bees'-wax or a couple of ounces of tallow, to prevent its being too brittle. It may be coloured with red lead, yellow ochre, ivory black, or any other like ingredient, in powder. Melt and mix it well in an earthen vessel over a very gentle fire; then let it cool so as to be only just liquid, when you may dip the necks of the bottles in it up to the rim round the neck. Leave the bottles standing upright until the wax is perfectly cold, when they may be piled in their places, as directed above. Great caution is requisite not to dip the bottles in the wax until it has cooled sufficiently; for if too hot, it will cause the necks of the bottles to split and burst.

A very large quantity of 'grand wine' is bottled in Bordeaux itself, to be sold or exported in cases; some holding fifty bottles each; others, for England, thirty-six, in compliance with the British custom of reckoning by dozens. The cellars in which they are kept are not subterranean excavations, nor are they called 'caves,' but in the local language 'chais'—a word which ought to be in French dictionaries, but which is not. The Derbyshire Peak cavern would make a first-rate chai. The Bordeaux chais differ only in size, being all constructed on the same principle, which is the exclusion of light, air, and changes of temperature, at a level little lower than that of the neighbouring streets or quays. You might take

them to be (if the country were mountainous) solid-built covered passages or galleries, for the protection of wayfarers from avalanches or the drippings of springs overhead. They are dark, stretching forward on and on (instead of plunging and diving, like Moët's champagne cellars), filled with a rusty-fusty-smelling atmosphere, which would doubtless be propitious to the culture of mushrooms. Luxuriant mouldiness is, in fact, considered one sign of a chai's superexcellence and extra-capability of ripening the liquid treasure therein stored.

Chai-bottled wines range in price from seven to fifteen or twenty francs per bottle on the spot, and are therefore not for everybody's drinking. They naturally find their way to millionaire and princely tables. Louis Philippe of France, in his time, bought up all that was produced of certain Médoc wines. The wine given, it was said, at the citizen king's dinners never cost less than fifteen francs per bottle. But let not the moderate-pursed diner despair, if he cares more for real excellence in his tipple than for brag and bravado while presenting it to his guests. When you have gone as far as five francs per bottle for Bordeaux wine (by which, in strictness, the wines of Médoc are meant), and have kept it the requisite number of years, you have as good wine as any reasonable person need wish to drink.

The difference in quality between five-franc and fifteen-franc wine is not proportionate to the difference in price. The dearer wine may be just a little better in respect to aroma or some other fancied property, but scarcely sufficiently so to warrant the excess of value put upon it. You pay for the name rather than for the

intrinsic goodness of the article supplied. Except for the sake of show and parade and doing honour to some extraordinary occasion, most people would prefer three bottles of five-franc wine to one of fifteen; certainly four bottles of five-franc wine to one of twenty francs. Knowing how limited the quantity of real 'grand wine' is, and how largely and how long beforehand that small quantity is forestalled by orders indifferent to price, the philosopher, instead of imitating great folks by means of doubtful compounds bedecked with mendacious labels, will content himself with a good *Bordeaux ordinaire*, costing at Bordeaux

from twelve to twenty pounds the *pièce*, yielding nearly three hundred bottles. For unusual rejoicings he can safely go a little higher, if his means permit, without fear of being deceived; but, unless peculiarly favoured by connection, person, or position, he will eschew tip-top grand wines as a temptation and a snare. When he buys them, he knows how much he pays per bottle; but he will not always know what he gets for his money. Even if he obtains the real thing, it will be questionable whether he receives money's worth; for, the proverb says, you may buy even gold too dear.

E. S. D.

IN THE DUSK AT DÜSSELDORF.

A Strange Experience.

I took the rooms without much consideration, for I had gone to Düsseldorf upon a miserable errand; none other indeed than to consult a famous oculist there. He wanted to watch over me for at least a month, and preferred that I should have the quiet of an apartment in a private house rather than be subject to the noise and bustle of an hotel. He knew the very rooms for me—they belonged to an artist friend of his, an animal-painter, who was away on a holiday, and who would be glad to get a tenant for the time being. They consisted of a large studio and dormitory attached, with a cupboard-like anteroom that gave by an outer door upon the main stair, whilst both painting-room and bedroom opened by separate doors into this tiny vestibule. Only after I had been settled in them for some hours had I the spirit even to regard the contents of my new abode. I was to use my damaged sight as little as possible, and I was to admit no more light into the rooms than was necessary for me to steer about by. Thus from sheer ennui rather than curiosity was it that I began to look about me, and to discover that I was in a luxurious habitation, fitted and furnished in the best possible taste. There were soft couches, thick curtains, rich tapestry, double-piled rugs, antique mirrors, cabinets, book-shelves, tables, chairs, lamps, what not, but save for an easel or two stowed away in a further corner, little or nothing to indicate

the presence of the professional artist. Some pictures there were about, but with one exception they were hung upon the walls as part of their decoration. This exception, however, was notable, and was standing unframed on a chair, where, had I dared to have withdrawn the blind, the rays from the high studio-window would have fallen full upon it.

Placed there in the obscure light, towards six o'clock in the autumn evening, this picture looked to me like the representation of a crouching animal; a panther, leopard, cheetah, one could not say. I could not see clearly, and it did not interest me; I merely saw it as I saw all else, automatically, dimly. My mind was too full of the gravity of my condition, of my prospects, my future; I was very lonely too, the more so because my man, who would otherwise have been reading to me, had been taken ill in the afternoon, and had been obliged to go to bed, his room being at the top of the house. And the house? Well, though let off in flats, according to the custom of the country, it was as silent and gloomy as if it had been in the city of the dead, and beyond, at long intervals, a foot going up and down the stair, not a sound was to be heard. At best there is little traffic in the thoroughfares of Düsseldorf, and this establishment was in a side-street.

Thus, then, I sat in the darkest corner of the room, with nothing but my own gloomy thoughts for company. Gloomier and gloomier

they grew as I dwelt upon them, until, indeed, I worked myself into a nervous fever, a fever of apprehension. Presently I was startled by a gentle knock at the door, one single gentle knock. Involuntarily I cried 'Come in;' but no one appeared, and for the matter of that I had noticed no footstep. So I thought I had been mistaken, and that the knock had been only one of those mysterious noises heard in rooms, and not at all times easily to be accounted for. But five minutes afterwards it was repeated exactly as before—one single gentle knock, there was no mistake this time. It was not as of a knuckle against the wood, but as of a real metal knocker. It was plainly, undeniably, a knock at the studio-door, which opened into the aforesaid little anteroom. Again I cried out 'Come in,' though again I had heard no footstep. Yet there was no response; and then remembering that I was abroad, and that my words might not be understood, I uttered their equivalent in German, though knowing little enough of the language. Still no result; so I waited and listened now, and in about five minutes, once more there came the knock, precisely like the last. Then I rose hurriedly, anxiously, and went to the door, opened it, and looked out. There was no one there; faint as the light was, and growing fainter now every minute, I was sure of that. I stepped across to the door opening upon the main stair. It was slightly ajar. As I did so I was seized by a curious cold sort of sensation, a sensation of goose-flesh all over me, as it is called. Opening wide this outer door, I still found no one upon the landing—not a creature was about, up or down the stair; all was silent as the grave.

Considerably puzzled, and ner-

vous, after a minute I returned to my seat in the studio, shutting the doors behind me. I had scarcely been seated an instant before that same strange chilly feeling crept through me again, amounting now to a shudder, that would have set my teeth chattering had I not controlled it. With it there came too a vague sense of dread, and a shrinking as it were within myself, quite indescribable. What could it mean? The weather was rather sultry and close than otherwise, and I had hitherto felt heated; now I could have borne a fire. Nay, I would have lighted one had there been any preparations for winter yet, in the elaborately ornamented china stove close to my elbow. As it was, I sat shivering at intervals as if I had an ague coming on, and feeling more miserable, ill, and depressed than ever. Yes, I sat, I suppose, for half an hour, strangely disinclined to move, but listening eagerly, and wondering if I should hear the knock again; but it never came, the silence was unbroken.

Very little light now remained in the apartment, and my gaze from my corner fell upon the picture on the chair; it was about the only object discernible, the rays of the twilight lingering longer of course just beneath the high window. Still merely regarding this object mechanically, I can hardly say what it was that first seemed to make me look at it with anything like an attentive interest, that first made me feel that I was looking at it with my brain as well as my eyes. I imagine it must have been a certain sense of surprise at seeing it so plainly, all else being very obscure. At any rate I could now make out the form and outline of the animal in strong contrast to the even half-toned back-

ground of the canvas, and in a way that I did not think I had been able to do before. Yes, there was the crouching creature, whatever it was, dark and mysterious, though with a kind of iridescent light about it, that made it palpable, plain, even to my imperfect vision. A leopard or cheetah surely, painted with immense force and life-like vigour, and represented as if in that writhing crouching attitude which immediately precedes the spring upon the prey. A subdued flashing fire was almost visible in the animal's eyes, the long curved tail seemed upon the point of lashing itself with the lithe rage of the wild beast. I grew quite excited as I discerned these details, these striking evidences of the artist's skill. Really the creature seemed almost alive, almost moving. So true to nature was it that, as the fact impressed me, the chill and dread under which I had before been labouring were immensely increased, and, nervous and miserable as I was, there started cold drops upon my brow. Shrinking more and more within myself, my teeth chattering, and with a horrible sense of stifling, I was about to rise in sheer dismay, when I was brought to my feet, aghast and in actual terror, by plainly seeing the animal move. Yes, undoubtedly, for a moment distinctly, there was a writhing motion, and then, with one angry sweep of the tail, the creature seemed to spring forward into the blackness of the room, and there remained nothing upon the chair apparently but the pale, plain, even-tinted tone of the canvas! I rushed to the door panic-stricken, seized my hat from the table in the anteroom, fled down the stairs, and out of the house.

The pleasant evening air re-

vived me; I began to collect myself a little, and to question whether I had not been a great fool—a nervous, highly-wrought, unreasoning fool. Was I not like a frightened child, dreading to be alone in the dusk, and who in its panic endows with life the shadow of some simple object, and thinks it has seen a bogie? No, I refused quite to accept this as the explanation. Out of condition as I was, I was not yet quite an imbecile; my wits had not all deserted me, and nothing, upon further consideration, would ever persuade me that I had been the prey of a mere hallucination. That there had been an unaccountable knock at my door I would swear with my last breath, and that cold shivering state which had supervened was no fancy. It was gone now; I was perfectly calm, and save for my one great anxiety—my sight—untroubled. Turning and looking up at the house as it stood, formal and gloomy in the twilight, for an instant I thought of reëntering, but I recoiled from the idea as soon as formed. No, I could not go back alone; weak, idiotic, contemptible as my conduct might seem, I shrank from the thought of entering those dusky rooms again without a companion. I was not forbidden to go out of doors in twilight or at night, and I determined to walk round to my doctor, and as he knew the rooms to confide in him, and ask him as a favour to go back with me for a while. Unluckily, as I then thought, he was from home—had gone into the country, and would not return until the following morning. Clearly I could not expose my weakness, if such it was, to any one else. I knew no one else in the place, and not speaking German could not attempt an explanation, even had I

been willing, with the porter or with the waiter from the hotel, whence I had arranged my meals were to be sent. There was nothing for it then but to go back alone, unless I chose to rouse my servant, and really that would be too foolish; no, I must face it by myself. So, plucking up courage, I went straight back, reëntered the rooms, the doors of which I found just as I had left them, slightly ajar; lighted a candle, walked boldly up to the picture on the chair, and examined it. There was the animal, a spotted beast, panther, cheetah, whatever it was, exactly as my first casual look at it had suggested; a large and vigorous sketch in oil, evidently from a master's hand. While I was looking at it the waiter brought my supper. He spoke some English, but I disdained referring to what had happened; and, without any return of the shivering sensation, I soon after went to bed and slept—slept till my servant, now seemingly all right again, brought me my coffee and roll in the morning.

'Bah! what an ass I have been!' I said to myself; but directly I thought straight back on the affair, I was more convinced than ever that, whatever my conduct, its causes were facts.

It was a bright sunshiny morning, with that sort of dazzling light everywhere which I was above all things to avoid exposing myself to. So after breakfast I sat in the darkened studio, with my man in the bedchamber reading to me. By this arrangement he could see the book, and I could hear him through the half-opened door of communication between the rooms, the separate doors of which, leading to the anteroom, were both closed. Well, we had thus been sitting for half an hour or so, and I had begun

to be deeply interested in what I was listening to, when suddenly all my thoughts were distracted, all my wits scared, by the knock at the studio-door, exactly as before—the single gentle knock, exactly like *that* last night. With it, too, on the instant came a slight renewal of the old shiver and creepy goose-flesh feeling. My man ceased reading; he had heard the knock as plainly as I.

'What was that, sir?' he asked presently.

I called him in, and whispering told him part of my experience of the previous evening.

'Keep quiet and listen,' I said, my teeth all but chattering; 'you will hear it again in a few minutes.'

We were both silent, and, sure enough, after a short interval there it was. He was going forward to the door: I checked him.

'No,' I went on; 'look out of the bedroom-door, go on tip-toe and open it very softly, and see what you can make out.'

'I need not open it at all, sir,' he answered; 'there is a window in it with a curtain across it.'

I followed him as he went back to the bedroom, and saw him gently draw aside the curtain, which I had not noticed.

'What do you see?' I whispered.

He was looking through into the anteroom.

'Nothing,' was the answer; 'it is so dark.'

But at that instant the knock was repeated.

'Can you not see the studio-door?' I said.

'Yes, sir; I can just make it out, and I see something shining in the middle of it, about three feet from the floor.'

There was another pause, and in the silence the knock was heard again. We both drew back.

Before we could either of us speak footsteps were on the landing, and I recognised the doctor's voice speaking to the porter, who evidently was showing him up to my apartments. In another moment he had entered the bedroom, to my intense relief. Briefly and hastily I explained what had happened just then and the night before.

'Goot gracious!' he exclaimed, in his broken English, 'vy, it must be poor Cato! O, te most vunderful beast in de world! Tid I not tell you of Cato te cat? No, I taresay not. Mein friend Smitt has trained him to to all tings but speak. Fritz te porter has te charge of him; but of course he escape to make te examination of his master's rooms: he toes not understand vy he is not to admit himself as usual.'

'But,' I interposed, 'does he knock at the door when he wants to admit himself? How can he do that?'

The doctor laughed good-humouredly.

'Ah, I have not told you. No, natürlich. Smitt has put te leetle prass knocker on te door for him to strike. He always strike vis his paw ven he vont to come in; lift so vis his leetle hand—so; and the doctor, still laughing, imitated the action with his hand against the corner of a hanging picture-frame. A light was beginning to break in upon me.

'And has Mr. Smith, may I ask, been painting Cato's portrait lately?'

'O, yes, te most vunderful likeness in te world, te most vunderful sketch, size of life—an illusion, a deception!'

'Ah, and it stands on the chair by the high window,' I said.

'Yes, te favourite chair vair Cato sit always to vatch for te

mouse; te hole is tareby below. Smitt has made him to sit like as in his picture, or, as I should say, ze picture as like to him sitting. He stand it on te chair to make te deception complete; so tat when te cat is not there, te picture look as if te cat was te cat there.'

'That was it then, of course,' I went on. 'He knocked at the door, I opened it; he slipped by me unseen, and also unseen perched on his chair, just in front of his picture, until in the dusk I chanced to observe his tail move.'

'O yes, O yes! ten he see a mouse, and, ah, ah! he pounce—that is, the cat out of te bag, as you say.'

'Yes, of course,' I said; 'and in the dusk, with my imperfect sight, I conceived it as I have related.'

'Ah, tear me, yes; vot a fuss! how you have set your pulse going! Come now, be calm, and sit down.'

We had walked into the studio, and the cat, having slipped in, and knowing the doctor, advanced with a friendly purr to meet him. All the while I had been talking my cold creepy feeling had been upon me, and now increased violently.

'Ah, to be sure; I see now,' went on the doctor. 'You are affected by te presence, electrically, of te cat. Yes, a strange instance, interesting to observe. You have known it before?'

'Never to this extent. I have never liked cats: this one is very peculiar;' and I shrank within myself as the huge creature, remarkable alike for its size and dusky spotted coat, approached.

The doctor made a gesture of repelling it, speaking meanwhile to it in German. It seemed to understand in a moment, and

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. VI.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

AMIDST beautiful flowers and the loveliest bowers

They met on a May-day morning ;

But in prose or in song such May meetings are wrong,

So this may have served as a warning.

For now maidens are ware of the morning air,

When the May dew glistens pearly ;

And young men are not drawn to turn out with the dawn

Of a May-day morning early.

I.

To save his skin he bade them thence

To keep it in the future tense.

II.

Centuries back it stood amid the sands :

Empty, yet scarce a ruin, still it stands.

III.

A scholarly cheat who with lying and mystery

Invented an alphabet, grammar, and history.

IV.

This charming girl of former years

To-day a thorough man appears.

V.

Be our condition what it may,

We were all this but yesterday.

VI.

Displaying royal state and power

These were committed to the Tower.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the June Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by May the 10th.



yes, that is it, fixed to death, I am, till my head runs wild; it is so I let me alone.

LONDON

JUNE

1891

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

—

At a late hour of the evening, I was sitting in my room, looking out at the stars, when I was startled by a knock at my door.

"Come in," I called. "What is it?"

"A lady has called to see you," said the maid.

"What lady?" I asked.

"She did not say, but she is waiting in the parlour."

I went down to the parlour, and found a young woman sitting on the sofa, looking very pale and distressed.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"I am very ill," she said. "I have been thinking of you very much, and I have come to see you."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"My name is Mary," she said.

"What is your address?" I asked.

"I do not know," she said. "I have no home."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"My name is Mary," she said.

"What is your address?" I asked.

"I do not know," she said. "I have no home."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"My name is Mary," she said.

"What is your address?" I asked.

"I do not know," she said. "I have no home."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"My name is Mary," she said.

LONDON SOCIETY.

JUNE 1878.

CRESSIDA.

By BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XIII.

CRESSIDA SETTLES HER ACCOUNTS.

CRESSIDA had broken off her engagement, yet the stars had not fallen from heaven, neither had the stones cried out. Nay, the petty household routine of the parsonage went on just as before; as unaffected as the order of Nature by the fact that Cressida had come down one morning braced up for the effort, and had made known her resolution to her father. The difficulty was to get him to take it in; or so far to believe she was in earnest as to acquaint other people with the fact, as she desired. He was accustomed to little captious freaks on her part; still she was always yielding, and this seemed to him a more serious piece of capriciousness than she could persist in when she came to reflect.

But there are resolutions born irrevocable, even in volatile natures; and Cressida could as soon have gone back three years in her life as retract now.

When she sat down to write to Norbert she blinked nothing; saw but too plainly the links of honour, invisible to outsiders, that bound

her to him. Yet this time she did not waver, nor have to search far for the right words. She had reason to think that something had reached him already—light rumours a week old, and which might have prepared him, in the sense that the first split in the planks of the boat prepares the adventurer for its foundering within sight of the shore. She knew she was abandoning him to an embitterment and depression the exact consequence of which to himself will just depend on how far he can make the spirit that he has do duty also for the vigour he has not. It grieved her, but in spite of this and whatever else that was displeasing to herself she foresaw from the step, she could not flinch any more. One shrinking had been turned out by a stronger. There was no choice for her left.

When Mr. Landon knew that such a letter had actually been written, that Cressida stood committed to the breach, nay, further, that some communication had come from Norbert in reply, and that all that remained for himself to do was to let it be known in various quarters, he was in despair, and his futile indignation ceased

not to vent itself in helpless laments and indirect reproaches, which were trying, certainly, but a mere trifle to other disagreeables to which of necessity she found herself exposed.

The news in the town spread like wildfire. Lullington was overjoyed by this fresh piece of food for discreditable gossip respecting a girl over whom its ladies were always shaking their heads. They had no patience with her attractions. Now as Lullington, like all towns of its class, was completely under petticoat government, it went hard with Miss Landon. Every tongue was at work with detraction and ruthless backbiting. Lady Sneerwell had always known how it would be. A girl—and a clergyman's daughter too—so extravagant in dress, so addicted to vain triumphs, could come to no good. Mrs. Candour had foreseen it long ago, when Cressida was a child of sixteen, with French airs and graces that had scandalised the soul of the British matron. There was, indeed, one young man so unblushing as to predict that she would be married to some one else in three months. But he was cried down by a reproving chorus. Norbert Alleyne had been shamefully treated, but he had had a happy escape. Another would not put his head into that noose in a hurry. Witness Mr. de Saumarez, who had been amusing himself somewhat at her expense—which was wrong of him, of course, but she had been rightly served. A new version of that affair had now gone abroad, but not yet reached Cressida's ears. Mr. Landon was universally pitied; still the Lullington world must not refrain, out of respect for him, from letting his daughter know what they thought of her. Poor Cressida! When

she had erred fatally, wilfully, by accepting her young lover, she had won her crop of praise and congratulation from these very same people. Now that, having tardily woken up to a truer sense of things, she shrank from the consummation of her error, she was met by a hue and cry of obloquy. The seeming unfairness revolted her. Hundreds of women marry for money; Lullington knows it, and never dreams of stoning them, reserving its missiles for those who stop short of crowning selfish ambition with hypocrisy.

Poor Cressida, again! Accustomed to dwell in the sunshine of admiration and favouritism—like the pet child to whom everything is forgiven—she felt inexpressibly cold and miserable in this new gathering climate of overt derision and ill-will, with only her own conscience to prop her up against the unfriendliness of her little world—she who could not stand alone any more than a clematis flower.

She would return to the thought that Stephen Halliday at least would say she had done right, and knew that this time she had acted conscientiously. There was comfort in that; there was support to which she clung closely, and which cheered her more than she would ever have allowed. But he had not yet fulfilled his promise of coming to see her, and she did not know but what he had left Monks' Orchard. At times a despairing dread suggested that something might have transpired about herself and Alec—some spiteful report, unproved if not unfounded—and he have gone away disgusted. Still idle gossip would not weigh much with such a man, and an inner recreant voice whispered he was unlikely to hear anything that, if she had the opportunity, she could not explain

away. That whole affair had been swept, like cobwebs, from her mind. She fancied it might leave as little trace there and elsewhere, and, with feminine inconsequence, looked confidently for her desired wheat-harvest to spring where she had busily sown tares.

Perhaps, she bethought her, it was from motives of consideration that Halliday had chosen not to come—lest it should embarrass her, and set tongues to work afresh. He might be right. She did wish to see him, but mainly for the sake of reassuring herself that he silently countenanced the course she had taken.

It had been a long, tedious day. Cressida had passed it in solitude. She hated going out, from a dread of meeting people: Lullington acquaintances, who looked askance, smiled, whispered to each other, and bowed their opinion of her, making her chafe, half furious, half ashamed.

A letter that had reached her that morning, from Joe Kennedy, lay on her toilet-table unopened. She felt too dejected to address herself even to that, as she sat through the afternoon hours in her room up-stairs, mournfully reviewing her future.

The sight of her trinkets—presents of jewelry from Norbert and others—made her melancholy, though not so much at this moment from remorse or relenting, as from a feeling of distaste for them, as for toys insipid and outgrown. Could she ever care for such things again—ever be happy enough? She was in the midst of this despondency when the servant came up to tell her that Mr. Halliday was in the drawing-room.

Her heart bounded with a heavenly sense of relief. For once in her life she forgot all about her personal appearance, never stopped to look in the glass, smooth her

hair or rearrange her dress, nor troubled her head as to what the visitor would think of the poky little parsonage. She ran down, and went in to meet him with a frank, childlike confidence and simplicity in her manner he had never seen there before.

It was new, because the self-forgetfulness that gave birth to it was a rare thing with her; still it was perfectly spontaneous. But on Halliday it naturally fell as a fresh and striking proof what a consummate actress she was.

He was no actor, and his first words, the merest commonplaces, fell upon Cressida like a series of downright rebuffs. In three minutes more she was sitting there chilled, numb, ill at ease, and with the odious feeling of having, as it were, gone and bruised herself against a gate, which she had rashly anticipated would fly open to welcome her, but had found locked and barred. Yet they had not got beyond polite platitudes on indifferent subjects. But the whole brunt of her father's rebukes and lamentations, the head-shakes and innuendoes of scandal-mongers, were a small thing to this. Silent contempt where she had counted on manly sympathy. She said to herself wildly that some barrier had intervened. O, to remove it! Then arose the whisper she strove to stifle, calling her to acknowledge that the barrier had been there a week ago; it was only that the light, for him, had not then been turned upon it.

'I had promised,' said Halliday constrainedly by and by, 'to call before going away, and I am leaving Monks' Orchard this evening.' He hesitated.

'Surely,' said Cressida, trying to smile, 'your visit needs no set apology or excuse.'

None to her, but it did seem to Halliday as if he needed one, to

himself. And his was ready. He was always fair, and he had reflected that as Alec was such a reprobate, and Lefroy something of a magpie, it might all have been a pack of lies, and their united insinuations amount to mere smoke. He said to himself he had been in a great hurry to give credit to all they alleged. Why must he take for certain that it was Cressida whom he had overheard philandering with Alec in the picture-gallery? To condemn her without positive evidence would be unjust. From her own lips he would find out what he wanted to know—what his cool head told him it was weakness to doubt.

'It is certainly very charitable of you to come,' continued Cressida lightly. 'I do not think many of my friends will show much lenity towards what I have done. From Lullington, at least, I shall get no quarter. I suppose I must expect people to fight shy of me, and submit to be ostracised, as I shall be for some time to come.'

'On what account?' said Halliday chillingly.

Cressida in blank hesitation received the thrust without an effort to parry it.

'Why, you knew—I told you—I thought that you, at least, believed me right—to go back—to acknowledge the false step I made once.'

'O—that,' said Halliday, in the same cutting tone. He was in that acutely painful state of mind when a man scarcely feels being cruel. 'I really was not certain to what you referred.'

Cressida was mute—defenceless. Let him vivisect her if he is bent on it, only she must—will—know *for what*.

He volunteered no word. At last she had to speak. The sus-

pense and silence were unendurable.

'Indeed, it is all very trying. I suppose I deserve it. I suppose I must put up with it; only I hoped—thought—that you understood that whatever ill I may be inflicting on others, I have had to suffer too.'

As she went on speaking she let her voice take a tone of appeal—of plaintive, almost humble, entreaty. Anything to break through this ominous, crushing reserve.

'Well, I am sorry it should have cost you so much,' he said, with perceptible irony; 'but I confess I hardly see how, after all that had occurred, you could have escaped *some* slight annoyance.'

Cressida felt stung to the quick. The repulse had prostrated her.

'By the way,' he resumed presently, 'I must apologise for having most unintentionally kept a piece of your property in my possession. To tell you the truth, I had forgotten all about it; and it was only yesterday, and by accident, that I discovered to whom it belonged.'

She looked at him inquiringly, unsuspectingly, quite at fault. He put a minute parcel into her hand. Out fell the chrysolite earring—Norbert's gift. The dance, that half-hour in the picture-gallery, Alec, the third person they had heard passing through: it all came back upon her, together with a full sense of the questionable part she had played, *now* seen by the light of its possible effect. The blood rushed to her cheeks; her eyes were confused; then she forced herself to look at him, and felt herself turn pale and sick under the creeping assurance that he must ever—ever misread her now.

Halliday's last loophole was closed. Her perplexity was sufficiently expressive. Unconsciously

he had relied on some vague, unreasonable hope. Its collapse flung him into the extreme of harshness. There was almost a bitter pleasure to him now in inflicting some of the pain he was feeling.

'I found the earring in the gallery,' he said carelessly, 'on the night of my arrival, as I went through to my room, the last thing.'

Cressida felt herself caught in an invisible net, that, step where she would, must trip her up in its threads. She made one more effort, turned to him, feeling that if only he would speak out, accuse her, reproach her, all might yet be well. Could she not drive him to it?

'But tell me,' she asked tremulously, in spite of herself, 'it was you?—I mean, did you not pass through the gallery once, before that, when I was there sitting out a dance with my partner?'

'Mr. de Saumarez,' said Halliday hardly, roused to increased contempt. Did she want to brave it out, now that she could neither deny nor conceal? 'My excuse for forgetting, which has led to my keeping it back so long, is, that the very last person to whom I should then have imagined it could belong was yourself.'

He stopped. 'Go on, go on,' said Cressida excitedly.

He laughed. 'Really I have nothing particular to add, except that I ought perhaps to apologise for my stupidity, since I should have known at once that you *must* be the owner.'

This man seemed fated to insult her. In the blinding heat of that moment she could not see, could not feel, that even now it was not mere disdain, but a vehement heart-burning that drove him to these unsparing home-thrusts.

She flushed painfully; anger was uppermost in her; but beneath her was a mournful sense of the

justice, nay the unalterable moral necessity, of what had wounded her like a wrong. She saw she had destroyed his trust, that any attempt at exculpation or self-justification would be thrown away, or worse.

'I do not know what you have heard,' she said at last, in desperation, 'but it is probably not worse than the truth. I was miserable, and forgot myself that night—said things I never meant to say.'

'O, pray!' interposed Halliday, with a very slight gesture of impatient deprecation; 'the subject is one between yourself and those around you, whose opinion affects you nearly. We need not discuss it any further, I think.'

That is to say, 'Reserve your confessions for ears that care to hear them.' It annihilated Cressida. Resentment held her up outwardly. What was the slur of Alec's unsanctified homage to studied insults like these? She had humiliated herself in vain, and suffered vividly from the mortification. Most effectually had he checked further approaches or unreserve on her part.

'You are right,' she said presently; 'we should never understand each other.'

Halliday rose. He knew he had been almost brutally straightforward, that he had given dire offence, and hating humbug, and accustomed to shun it, he hesitated a moment to put out his hand.

Cressida saw it; saw it with a sort of bitter amusement. She gave a little cold laugh, and offered her own scornfully, saying,

'I was speculating this morning whether you would keep your promise, and come. I see now that you pay what you owe, in full.'

The moment he was gone she

brokedown into passionate crying. When Mr. Landon came in he was told she was ill, and would not leave her room that evening, and wished to be alone. She felt broken, nerveless, extinguished.

Halliday went on his way composedly, took his journey up to town in a comfortable smoking-carriage, and on arriving addressed himself to his business letters with the same apparent zest and attention as usual. Yet that evening he suffered the most of the two. Never had life and eternity looked so deformed to him before. Pity those driven to withdraw their trust and affection above those even who have forfeited it.

The next day she came down looking like Cressida's ghost. Mr. Landon began to take alarm on her account, as he easily did, for she was always a fragile creature. He feared the worry might have proved too much for her. Her languor and depression, which she scarcely cared to hide, confirmed him in a plan he had broached already, a plan to take her away for a couple of months to the seaside. She had seemed averse to it yesterday, but listlessly acquiesced this morning in whatever he proposed. It must be a relief, she thought, to get away from Lullington, but she could not bring herself to wish anything distinctly. Mr. Landon, convinced in his mind that it was for the best, and finding her so meek, took advantage of her mood to make arrangements immediately. There was a widowed sister of his just starting with her children for Seacombe, on the Devonshire coast, and his idea was to join them there with his daughter in a fortnight. 'It would be more cheerful for everybody,' he said. Cheerfulness was a word out of Cressida's dictionary

that morning. If it is to return the dull, aching, mental pain, scarcely distinguishable from physical, now weighing her down, must die out first. Divided between exhaustion and restlessness, she smiled at her father's significant dictum that she would enjoy being with friends,—such as her aunt and cousins.

'Friends, yes,' she thought, 'because they are really strangers. Everybody who knows me is hard and cruel. Have I a friend in the world?'

A forgotten word came back on her, echo-like, in reply :

'One, whilst I live.'

Joe, she seemed to hear his voice, as he had said it, in her ear at this moment, like a reproach.

There lay his letter, still unopened. She went to it now to distract herself.

As she read, a soothing sensation crept over her; he had written her the kindest note in the world—its tone woke in her a flash of hearty gratitude that brought pleasant tears to her eyes. Joe stood by her, knew she was right, said so—admired her firmness, wished her well, and blamed her for nothing. To be sure he did not know all. Yet Cressida felt that if he, and not Stephen Halliday, had been her silent accuser yesterday, she would perhaps not have stooped to plead for herself in vain. She would have made him forgive her. Joe did not trample on people—liked to lift them up when he could.

Under the impetus of this rush of feeling she sat down to answer him, very briefly. A few meet words of acknowledgment and thanks came easily. An intimation that it was cheering to her to be understood by some one at last seemed due. Then she told him they were leaving home for two months, mentioned Seacombe

as their destination, and suggested an idea—a wish—that if he had time he might come down there to see them.

Joe is a country squire now—England claims him, not California—he will make time.

Mr. Landon hurried their departure. That Cressida should desire to absent herself for a little while till the noise of the affair had blown over astonished no one. She wondered privately what exact reports might be current about herself and Elise's graceless stepson, but, shunning society, had no means of discovering. Since her departure from Monks' Orchard she had seen nothing of its tenants; but Alec, she heard, was away now, and not coming back. His steeplechase had miscarried, for which he might curse, or bless, Halliday; and with it he had abandoned the scene and the reminiscence thereof, but went away rejoicing in the comforting assurance that Halliday also had been thrown. The present was no time to renew his manoeuvres with Cressida, however strong her hold on his fancy still. Elise kept aloof. She made a point of *not* coming to visit her friends when they were in adversity, maintaining that this was the truest kindness to show, since people do not care to have witnesses of their reverses. She thought that Cressida had played the fool exceedingly, and was glad the girl was going away, as it spared her friends the necessity of telling her so. By the time the Landons came back, the affair would have gone the usual way of nine days' wonders.

Cressida was now getting impatient to leave—the isolation fretted her, yet society would have been worse. She could not, as heretofore, take refuge in talking

over her troubles with her friend Fan. Colonel Alleyne had very sternly forbidden all communication between his family and hers. That part of the affair had been, as poor Mr. Landon mildly expressed it, 'very unpleasant indeed.' The more unpleasant for him since the Colonel, persuaded that the clergyman must have had a voice in the matter and that the daughter's wishes were things of no moment, had been chiefly irate with him, and came out with violent language and unjust aspersions, which so irritated the parson as to disgust him with the very name of Alleyne, incline him to defend his daughter's conduct, and to begin to view it in a more favourable light.

Despite her previous impatience, Cressida, when the last day came, felt as oddly reluctant to leave home as though this were not an ordinary good-bye. Late in the afternoon, in accordance with her old habit, she sauntered up the hill, and lingered towards sunset at the old resort behind the church under the ash-tree. As she stood watching the lingering lights and broken gleams she saw a little girlish figure come hastening down the path from the gate by the road above; some one who knew Cressida's haunt, and made directly for the spot where she stood leaning against the low wall, hidden by the rising ground. It was Fan. Cressida, half glad, half sorry to see her, was too proud to let much effusion appear in her manner.

'What, Fan!' she said, in a tone of listless surprise. 'Have you actually come to wish me good-bye? I thought this was forbidden ground to you now.'

'So it is,' said Fan bluntly; 'but what of that? I felt I *must* see you before you went. I have only two minutes though.'

'You have come just in time. We start to-morrow.'

A dead pause followed. The two girls stood side by side, looking at the sinking sun, to avoid looking at each other. Fan had made a desperate push for this interview; but now she was there she was awkward, tongue-tied, more abashed than Cressida.

'Have you nothing to tell me?' Cressida began at last, with an effort. Her shirking of the subject uppermost was cowardly, she supposed, and must be got over. 'Nothing from—your brother?'

It was startling to herself to be reminded at this moment of how seldom, how faintly she had thought, since the break, of him whose promised life-companion she had been but a few weeks ago.

Fan shook her head.

'O, nothing. But he wrote to you, I suppose. What did he say?'

'Merely that he had my letter—that he understood. That was at first—'

'Yes, yes,' broke in Fan; 'a line for all the world to see.'

Cressida hung down her head. Exactly. Mr. Landon had seen it, thought it rather cold and abrupt, and drawn his private conclusions that young Alleyne was clearly no heart-stricken lover.

'I wrote again,' said Cressida, 'to beg for just one line to say he would forgive me. Perhaps it was foolish of me to ask—to expect it. But surely you must have had a word from him since.'

'Just this,' said Fan: 'that he won't have *us* at home allude to what has passed—not in writing or otherwise.'

'Where is he now?'

'At Axbury; he is to stay. He is not coming at all to Greywell—nor to London, till the winter.'

Cressida felt glad momentarily.

They would be spared meeting then—which was something.

'Mr. Lefroy wrote to us about Norbert, though,' continued Fan, with an odd expression; 'declared he was all right, did not seem depressed, but well and in spirits; going about his work regularly as usual, apparently quite up to the mark. Those were his words.'

Again Cressida felt relieved—this time it was from certain unpleasant apprehensions that had visited her imagination now and then.

'I'm glad I've heard that,' she said; 'I shall be happier now.'

'You can believe it then?' asked Fan, looking her straight in the face with a silent reproach in her eyes, before which Cressida's fell; 'you who knew him better than anybody?'

'Mr. Lefroy is his intimate friend, surely.'

'What need a man know of his intimate friend?' retorted Fan, with high contempt. 'Norbert might live a whole life apart, and if he did not choose, and the friend was a man, he would never find out.'

Cressida felt a little impatient. Her real desire that the effect on him of what had passed should not be very deep, she secretly thought rather angelic. Some women would have preferred to know that he was inconsolable.

'You think, then—' she began, inquiringly; but Fan cut her short, saying, in a hard dry tone,

'I only know what you know—that everything is out of joint for him again for a long, long time; that he is a fellow on whom things tell violently, but who keeps himself to himself.'

'Still,' Cressida persisted, 'what Mr. Lefroy says sounds well, as far as it goes.'

'Of course it does,' said Fan, her pent-up vehemence and indig-

nation bursting out at last. 'I needn't go to Mr. Lefroy to learn that Norbert has pluck enough for two. What he says goes no further than that. And whatever happens to Norbert I shall always feel, somehow, as if it were to myself. Cressida, Cressida, it is hard to have peace and happiness given you at last, but only, as it turns out, to try how well you can stand having them knocked on the head!'

'What is it that you are afraid of for him?' asked Cressida presently.

Fan leaned her elbows on the wall, her head on her hands, and looked away into the far, far distance, as she replied moodily,

'I am afraid—of his losing all faith in himself, and in what he cares about. If he were to go to the bad, now,—he who was *meant* to be good and always has been,—well, I've a feeling that I couldn't wonder very much, all things considered.'

Cressida sighed despondingly.

'You all hate me, then,' she murmured. 'I told you you would.'

'Cressida!'

'O, you're right, Fan! I've been a fool—' She broke off, and then began suddenly, changing her tone, 'Tell me now what is said of me exactly; I want to hear.'

'Said—where?'

'O, in Lullington, by our friends and acquaintances. You have heard something, I daresay.'

Fan, indeed, had heard enough not to be anxious to retail it now.

'What for,' she asked bluntly, 'since it isn't true?'

'I *will* know!' said Cressida obstinately, the girl's reluctance firing her curiosity. 'Are you so sure it may not be true?' Fan still preserved a dogged silence. 'But perhaps I can guess. They say that I—I broke it off because of Mr. de Saumarez.'

Fan cast down her eyes, and seemed to assent.

'And what else? What can they say of us *now*? Fan, I mean to know!'

'They say—that he was never in earnest.'

A natural thing for them to say; still such a bungling version of the real truth that it had never occurred to her as that likely to circulate. In the eyes of the world, then, she had had designs upon Alec; thrown over Norbert for him, as for higher game; to be thrown over in her turn, ignominiously, after having rashly compromised herself to some extent in the eyes of the neighbourhood by her manner of accepting his idle addresses. The reflection gave a fresh wound to her vanity, one of those that rankle sorely and deep. She stood looking gloomy and resentful.

'Look here, Cressida,' said Fan brusquely; 'we used to be friends. You might tell the truth to me.'

'About—?'

'Mr. de Saumarez,' said Fan, as if pronouncing the name were a dose of physic. 'Is he anything to you?'

'My evil genius, perhaps,' thought Cressida, laughing sadly to herself; the response, that is to say, to a certain treacherous fastidiousness of hers, in the first place; to all in her that was indolent and selfish, in the second; and to nothing else besides.

'Not much,' she replied evasively. 'Of course Lullington knows nothing, says everything that is untrue—' She paused, to resume the next moment, with vehemence: 'I'm glad I'm going to-morrow. I wish never, never to come near this hateful place any more. Fan, who knows when I may see you again? Tell Norbert—'

'It's no use,' Fan interrupted.

'I tell you he won't speak of it. I don't think he ever will.'

'Good-bye, then,' said Cressida vacantly.

'You leave me in the dark about yourself. You, too, will tell me nothing,' urged Fan.

Cressida drew her hand over her eyes. 'My dear, it is all so dark to me—the present, the future, the past above all. Good-night, good-bye !'

CHAPTER XIV.

COUP D'ÉTAT.

IN a picturesque village on one of the loveliest parts of the Devonshire coast, where the red fields, variegated woods, blue sea and sky were second only, in their rich and vivid colouring, to the tints in that bright Sorrento, after which, as usual in desponding moments, she had lately begun to pine, Cressida had spent the most irksome three weeks of her life.

A charming abode in itself was Mavis Lodge, Seacombe, which the party had taken for the two months—a small gray gabled villa, clinging to the heights bordering the harbour, some way apart from the village out towards the sea, with a steep evergreen slope under the windows, descending to the water's edge, and where winding walks led down to the little landing-place and boat-house below.

Intolerable the reaction after such protracted excitement; sickening the *désœuvrement* of a rural holiday to one who is spoiled for small and innocuous amusements. The placid domestic atmosphere; the tribe of noisy little cousins—all very fond of her, and, like puppies, over-demonstrative in their affection; the garrulity of her aunt, of whom circumstances had made a head-nurse merely,—it had all been like a *régime* of toast-

and-water to one who has been living on stimulants. Cressida had said to herself it was a penance, taken it as such, behaved charmingly, winning, as usual, the adoration of the whole home-circle of her kith and kin, whilst growing, however, more and more dispirited every day. No news, no fresh tokens of sympathy or interest from abroad; worse, none to expect. The bubble of Cressida Landon's importance in the world seemed to have burst very suddenly.

She had done it herself, by tampering right and left with those with whom she had to do. All Lullington now was enjoying her discomfiture. O, to be able to hold her own there still! Not that she over-valued the praise or blame of that community; but, resenting its power to affect her, she longed fervently to beat them at their own conventional weapons, and, now that they presumed to look down upon her, to give some such signal proof of her superior consequence in society as should put them all to confusion. It was a sorry ambition to have come to, certainly; still there it was.

But nobody believed in her any longer. Why, even Joe seemed to have given her up! He had never written back again in reply to that small note of hers; and on the last day of those three weary and unprofitable weeks Cressida, whilst taking her regular afternoon walk with her cousins through the solitary fern-lanes and up and down the steep hill-sides of the country, and thinking things over for the thousand and first time, found herself dwelling chiefly and mournfully on this,—with a despairing feeling that when Joe turns against her she will cease to believe in herself.

Is thought electrical? What at that very moment should be

hurrying down to Seacombe but the answer to her letter, in Kennedy's own person. When Cressida and the children returned to Mavis Lodge, whom should they find but himself in the sitting-room with Mr. Landon. He had been installed there for half an hour, and was already busy arranging fishing excursions up the river with the parson, an inveterate angler, and who never dreamt but that a special providence had brought Joe—just the fellow-sportsman he wanted—to Seacombe for a week at that particular period.

His advent proved a signal blessing for all, and for one in particular. He took up his quarters at the local hotel, but spent the whole of his time with the inmates of Mavis Lodge. He fished with the clergyman, romped with the children, took them out boating as often as they liked. Joe was more than half a water-rat, and well at home in almost any practical seafaring capacity.

For Cressida that week had been a marked contrast to the three first. She had found something healthy and invigorating in his good-tempered, enlivening company among them; something catching in his high spirits; and, above all, something sweet and soothing to her self-love—so rudely handled lately—in the certainty now ever present with her that, rightly or wrongly, she held her old bright particular place in his estimation still.

She felt her old mettle revive. The loveliness of the landscape no longer fell on sealed eyes. She had grown quite fond of Mavis Lodge, with its hill-side rock-garden of shrubs,—arbutus, holly, cypress, and laurustinus; the drawing-room with picture-views of the harbour and wooded hills, where they sat and played round games

in the evening. Sometimes in the mornings she and Joe would find themselves simultaneously standing still and staring out of that bay-window, fixedly watching—the little yachts in the harbour, was it, or the distant hills, or the peep of sea beyond?—and so they would stay for minutes together, whilst the children raced and romped around, and without saying a word, but with a dim and distant intelligence, as of thoughts somehow siding together. Not a single phrase in allusion to past events had been breathed between her and Joe, and indeed even a five minutes' *tête-à-tête* was difficult to manage, where the order of the day was nothing if not gregarious. They did not try for it either. Cressida did not need to be told his opinion.

'It was a foolish engagement, but she was perfectly right to break it off. It was the one wise thing left to do, only I feared she might never have the resolution to own it and act upon it.' Such was Joe's mental comment, all told. He would scarcely have thought it necessary to speculate on what at last had given her this resolution, but for an inkling that there had been some one else for whom she had a liking—Stephen Halliday, whom Joe knew to have been down at Monks' Orchard at the time, and whose name, on the faintest possible grounds—such as her way of pronouncing it, a careless hint dropped once upon a time by Elise—he had come to associate with hers.

On the other hand, it was pretty clear that Halliday had never been near her since—not once had Joe heard his name mentioned at Mavis Lodge; and lastly, there was Cressida's letter, on the strength of which Joe was now down at Seacombe with a definite purpose.

Late events had made an important change in his prospects, and, he considered, in his position with regard to her. Joe was sadly prosaic in some of his theories. It is a good deal to ask of a delicate creature in her right mind to risk her health or her life for your sake, in extreme climates—amid fatigues and hardships from which she must suffer a hundred times more than yourself. If Cressida, thus sued, 'did not see it,' as Joe would have said, he would have thought no ill of her on that account. But the case was altered.

Not that he was a rich man, even now. Tom had taken care of that. Still, there are two kinds of poverty—real and artificial, so to speak. He was secure against the first, and had in fact been thrust unexpectedly into a very smooth specimen of the walks of life.

His week was up. The last afternoon was spent, like most of those preceding it, in a seaside ramble with the children and Cressida. At the clamorous demand of the former, they made for a favourite point where steep gorse-grown hills sloped down to the shores of a little cove, tempting the adventurous to scramble down to a bit of beach below—a mass of broken rocks, whose slippery surfaces, uncanny nooks and corners, and the pools adjoining, full of marine life, animal and vegetable, afforded a grand source of delight to the five juvenile minds. Cressida sat on a rocky mound apart and attempted a sea sketch, whilst Joe good-naturedly disported himself with the children. They tired of clambering at last, whereupon he set them to practise his retriever dog in fetching things out of the water—a fascinating game which promised to last as long as the almost inexhaustible patience of the beast. All five were thus busily en-

grossed when, leaving them presently, he sauntered up to where Cressida was sitting, 'just to see how she was getting on,' he said. The sketch had not been proceeding rapidly, but now the artist became suddenly very industrious. Joe posted himself on a shelf of rock a little higher than hers, and looked on, observing that it was the first time he had seen her colour-box open since he had come, a week ago to-day.

'Are you really off to-morrow?' she said. 'It will be so dull without you.'

'Must go,' he said laconically; 'the lawyers have me in their hands, worse luck! Everything is in a state! But it has been a jolly week.'

'Yes,' said Cressida; 'and I was so miserable before, you have no idea, and getting so cross. It was no wonder, though, after that dreadful last fortnight at home.'

'Tell me,' said Joe, hammering little stones and shells out of the rock with his metal-tipped stick, 'how did your father take it?'

'O, pretty well. He was dismal, though; but that was not the worst. Lullington, of course, took the opportunity to say every evil thing of me it could possibly think of or invent.'

'O, I daresay,' fell in Joe cheerfully; 'but I don't care who says you were wrong; I say you were right, if you found you didn't care for him, to tell him so.'

Cressida sighed.

'Yes; but you must think of the circumstances, and all that made it so perplexing and difficult.' (It was easy to be frank in this part of her confession to Joe, with the certainty of absolute remission before her.) 'For me he had broken, in a way, with the only other thing in life he cared about. He might have been happy once, with that, and with-

out me. His people were dead against him, and I used to think he would never have the self-assurance to break away from it all. But there was a moment when he could and would have flung over everything for music, and I did not let him.' She paused a moment; then concluded sadly, 'I feel he may not have the spirit for it now, or not till it is too late.'

'Well, he's ever so much better off where he is, in the bank,' returned Joe obstinately. 'He's a good berth for life; and one of these days he'll be glad he never shifted it, depend upon that, whatever it was that kept him there. It's a poor wretched sort of living that a man picks up off his wits.'

Cressida smiled. It was false comfort, she knew, though offered in all sincerity. Yet she took it. She could not think honestly of Norbert without some forebodings, vague, but so unpleasant, that she hated, so to speak, to be left alone with them.

'How unromantic you are!' she said, laughing. 'But, do you know, I think I am getting unromantic, too. It is because I've been given to dreaming that I'm miserable now.'

'But you are happier now than before you made up your mind to free yourself, aren't you?' Joe suggested, still poking and hammering perseveringly.

'Not much; it has lost me so many friends.'

'Nonsense!'

'O, it has, indeed! I recollect your declaring once that you would never quarrel with me, whatever happened. You've kept your word. I've been reminded of that, and often thought of it lately.'

'How thought of it?' said Joe attentively. Cressida did not answer immediately, and he continued, pretending to laugh, 'Be-

cause, I don't know how it came—for it was never *my* way to be given to dreaming—but once or twice I've caught myself trying to believe that you care for my keeping my word there more than you used.'

'Perhaps I do,' said Cressida simply; 'at least, I've come to the conclusion that friendship is a truer, and a much, much rarer thing than love.'

'If you think that,' he began with an impetuous rush, but suddenly checking his pace to continue more deliberately, 'you won't cut up rough, at least, if I talk to you a bit about what has been in my head ever since I had your last letter.'

'My letter?' she repeated inquiringly.

'Something—you see, if I wouldn't let myself think of it before, it was because I was a badly-paid journeyman engineer, adrift on the world, without a home to speak of,' said Joe. 'And I'm not a bit rich, as it is. The estate is smothered with debts, and there's Tom's widow to be provided for, and all that; still—'

'O, hush!' she exclaimed quickly; 'I wish—O, how I wish!—you were *quite* poor.'

'Well, so I am; poor enough, in all conscience,' said Joe, laughing with sudden gaiety; 'it's only that I sha'n't again be dependent on my two arms being in working order.' He stopped, and then asked gravely, 'But why do you wish I was poor, Cressida?'

She raised her face with a look as if just going to speak, but changed her mind, bent down her head again, and remained perversely silent. In vain he repeated his question.

Joe had meant to be cool and matter-of-fact, come what might. Even now he continued to dig shells out of the rock; but

his voice was not quite so steady as he expected, as he proceeded :

‘You know that I care about you as I care for nobody else in the world ; but what does that signify to you ?’

‘Everything, now.’

The words fell from her lips plaintively and softly, as it were in the shadow of a whisper.

But Joe had heard them. His stick slipped from his fingers, and his zoological researches came to a sudden stop, as he spoke in a different, firmer tone,

‘When you broke off with him, you never thought of me. That I knew, but—’

‘Stay,’ interposed Cressida gently. ‘It was all broken off in my own mind, months before ; only I was a coward, and dared not act.’

Just as he had supposed. He liked to think he knew her so well.

‘Still, there was another fellow—Cressida, you must forgive me, for they did say (at least I got into my head) that you cared about the man’—Joe’s voice was now a circumstance over which he had no control, and was telling tales right and left—‘that fellow from Egypt—’

‘Never believe what they say of him and me,’ said Cressida impetuously. The memory of that last encounter was a thorn that rankled very deeply still. ‘At least—I’ll tell you the truth—I think once he did admire me in a way ; but it is all past and gone, and I’m glad of it. I would sooner have another man’s friendship than his love. People like him, in love, are hard and selfish and cruel. For the rest, he never could find it in him to care about me, you know.’

‘I always thought,’ said Joe ingenuously, ‘that, for a clever fellow, Halliday was uncommonly dense about some things.’

‘Don’t talk of it,’ she said hastily. There was no wavering, but a lingering regret—too remote for Joe to catch—in her tone as she added slowly, ‘We are very, very far apart, and it is quite impossible he should ever get any nearer to me.’

‘Could I?’ said Joe, in the lowest of voices.

Cressida’s reply was nearly inaudible. So much of it Joe understood—that it was playful, and to the effect that he might try if he liked.

Bounce, the retriever dog, came rushing up, shaking himself violently and sprinkling them both with salt-water, to the infinite glee of the mischief-makers driving him on behind, whom Joe fell to pelting with shells and handfuls of seaweed accordingly.

An hour later they all returned to Mavis Lodge.

The evening that followed was a particularly merry one ; the young folks noticed it, and loudly bewailed Mr. Kennedy’s approaching departure. To their upbraiding he only replied by making more fun for them to-night. He felt half-daft with sheer exuberance of animal spirits. But nobody wondered ; he was always at his pranks with the children—not even the elders suspected that it was an understood thing between him and Cressida.

He went away the next morning. He and Cressida had agreed to keep their secret to themselves for the next few weeks. As soon as the time approached for leaving Seacombe, Mr. Landon should be duly informed. On another point both Joe and Cressida were determined and of one accord—that there should be no delay, but that their marriage should follow as soon as practicable after the declaration of her engagement on her return to Lullington. Lul-

lington—Cressida could think of it now with secret exultation; there was a malicious, an incalculable pleasure in thus turning the tables upon her detractors. For herself, the change was one from fretting fever to sudden serenity, and so welcome, that she forgot to pine for joy and gladness. Just when she seemed to have cut herself off most hopelessly from support and sympathy, and was feeling the deprivation most acutely, they had been offered her most unconditionally. Something that may suffice both to her *amour propre* and her dependent disposition—the best affection of a vigorous, honest, energetic, generous nature, one on whom she can lean,—Halliday's intellectual inferior, certainly, but morally equal to him or to any one.

False to Norbert, her innocent enemy; false to her own proud colours, by admitting such an ascendancy as Alec's to decide her life; self-estranged thus from that higher future held out to her once,—she wondered now and then what she had done to deserve this reward. Nothing whatever.

It was hers, though. She laughed, and said to herself, she meant to deserve it afterwards, and what with gratitude, and the relief of restored hopefulness and spirit, and escape from shadows and loneliness, she felt, at times, to her great surprise, as if she *almost* loved him.

About a month later, Lullington was electrified by tidings that fell on it suddenly, and that passed all understanding. The last word of 'all that scandal' about Miss Landon was, that she was going to be married in October to the new master of Monks' Orchard.

No mistake this time. Mr. Landon had written all about it from Seacombe, in a letter to a brother clergyman in Lullington,

whose wife passed the happiest afternoon of her life in making a round of calls, and disseminating the pungent intelligence like a pepper-box.

'The luck some girls have!' groaned poor Mrs. Churchward, forgetting herself in a moment of despair over her feminine unmarried offspring of six. The young gentleman who had prophesied such an occurrence was naturally elated, and felt his prestige as a man of the world run up enormously. The sneering sisterhood shrugged their shoulders, and, for a time, indulged freely both in open reprobation and dark and venomous hints.

Still, when the first surprise had abated, and it was well realised that Cressida was returning home, not languishing for the faithless Alec, nor an object of compassion for any one, but holding her head very high, and actually going to become the wife before very long of the young squire, a milder tone, perforce, began to prevail. After all, the leading families agreed, it had been rather a foolish affair with Norbert Alleyne—a mere boy—too young, perhaps, to know his own mind—or hers. As to that other entanglement, it might very probably have been exaggerated and misrepresented. Mr. de Saumarez might be the only one to blame. Nay, some had asserted that it was *not* Alec at all, but another man, whom she had been in love with at that very time! Coming out of such confusion one version of the facts sounded about as plausible as another. Finally, certain people of a romantic turn of mind carried back their memories to balls of three years ago, when Cressida and Joe Kennedy had been observed to dance together a good deal; and upon this they built up a pretty story of a prior attach-

ment between the two, and a lover's quarrel, which had sent Joe off to California in a huff, and driven Cressida to eventually accepting Norbert out of pique at the other's neglect and desertion. And lo, everything had come right at last, just as in a book.

The young lady, when shortly she reappeared on the scene, did not help to enlighten them, or gratify their curiosity. She had come home to find Lullington baffled and forced to knock under, and could not resist the temptation of showing herself chilly and distant in her turn. A few facts were extracted from Mr. Landon, who was more easily pumped. The wedding was to be in October, and perfectly quiet. The young couple were going afterwards to spend a few weeks at Seacombe—where the engagement had taken place—previous to starting abroad for an indefinite time, it might be a year. It was pretty generally understood that Tom Kennedy had left his affairs in a most embarrassed state, and that some time must elapse before the exact position of the new owner could be known. It might turn out not to be so brilliant a match by any means, and certain evil-disposed persons, forgetting that history does not repeat itself, kept predicting that she would throw him over at the eleventh hour, now rapidly approaching.

Everything, in truth, had gone apace; but the consequent hurry and constant distraction, which Joe regretted for Cressida's sake, were a real relief to her. The temptation to be always so busy as not to have leisure to think of by-gones carried all before it. There was nothing outward to force them upon her remembrance at present. The Alleynes were away, so was Elise de Saumarez. Alec had joined his regiment in

Ireland. That flirtation extraordinary of theirs seems forgotten and faded, and she likes to treat it as insignificant; no need to vex Joe with what she knows he would never quite understand. She brings in Alec's name repeatedly, talks of him in a general way as having been on the list of her devoted admirers, and finds there are cases where speaking the truth openly is the very surest way to keep your own counsel. If ever it should be necessary to say more, she will do so, of course; but at present no. Joe thinks her quite perfect, and she will not have him qualify that opinion. She may, if she chooses, be thoughtless and happy, as though Norbert had never existed, or his friendship been hers to betray; as self-complacent as though the episode of her Monks' Orchard visit were a mere dream—her whole past an accident, without cause or consequence.

She has built up a fortune for herself higher and more securely than ever. For Joe is as different from that shy dreamer, Norbert, as from Alec the Conqueror. She has grown much fonder of him since they were engaged. She quite loves him now.

Why should not the sun shine and the waves be smooth for her to her journey's end? To be sure, looking back does not flatter. There may be a wreck behind; there were rapids that caught you like a straw, and therefore may do so again. But the track before you is fair, and propitious altogether. Swamp your neighbour's boat when it blocks your way, forget the little eddies that all but sank your own. A gallant steamer has taken your little craft in tow. Laugh back at those who would not go to sea to sink or to swim with you.

CHAPTER XV.

HALF A YEAR ONWARD.

It was a new thing for Joe Kennedy to find himself in the position of Polycrates. Who would have thought that he, of all men, should come in for such an extraordinary run of general good fortune as warm hearts can hardly enjoy without a tinge of generous compunction !

A *parvenu* in paradise ! Looking back a year, he sees himself bearing his full share of the burdens of life, its toil and its *ennui*, in his capacity of pioneer in rough, half-populated lands—a condition, that alternates between the extremes of convulsion and stagnation—and with no enjoyment in particular beyond what he might find in work, for work's sake.

That, in his case, was limited. Joe was no steam enthusiast. Professional ardour scarcely carried him beyond the point of natural manly satisfaction in subduing obstacles and making rough places plain, without the fillip that the sense of working for a beloved somebody else can give. Six months have realised an immense fund of happiness for him—placed him with the favoured few among his fellow-creatures. The world is a fine city for him to dwell in, no longer a mere tent.

Parvenu though he was, he did not forget his hard days, which, remembered now, seemed harder and drearier by contrast than at the time. Yet he knew that, even then, his had been a fair average lot, as lots are cast ; and thus it came that he felt as if he had better instantly go and sacrifice some precious possession to square accounts with the envious gods.

It was nothing but timely poetical justice. For he had borne himself very well throughout an up-hill career, and, so far, his lift

had been amply deserved. But he was practical man enough to know that virtue gives no claim to an immediate tangible reward, and took his luck as a *bonus*, a free gift of fate. Besides, it seemed to him of that ineffable sort no fellow can be said exactly to deserve.

Cressida, notwithstanding that he had always thought her, in a general way, the most winning of women—it was only now that he began to understand what he meant by it. How, indeed, except in the vaguest, clumsiest fashion, should one like him have formed any conception of the countless, inimitable, pretty little ways one like her has of fascinating you, soul and sense, and the super-sweetness of being fascinated thus ! Though personally the incarnation of simplicity, Joe was far from insensible to delicate influences. New ideas and impressions, even delightful ones, took time to penetrate into his mind ; but he had plenty of appreciation in his soul, and every hour of the day brought him fresh revelations what an attractive, what an endearing creature he had married. Had Cressida asked him : ‘Am I all you expected I should be ?’ he should have replied : ‘All, and more’—more than he had it in him to expect.

She had a variable disposition, but he did not mind that. Not being nervous himself, her moods merely amused him. Whether playful or earnest, pettish or caressing, elated or depressed, was she not always Cressida, dearest of women, and always his ?

It was a time of enlightenment for him, this gradual initiation into a kind of superfine happiness, such as he had never concerned himself with before, so entirely had it lain out of his rude experience. Even now there was a mystery about it. His rough and

ready nature must accept, with blind gratitude, these life-sweets of a kind it can never requite.

After those first few weeks at Seacombe the young couple had left for the Continent, intending to remain away a year. There were many reasons inducing them to defer, for so long at least, settling down at Monks' Orchard. In a year the disagreeable stir caused by Cressida's break with Norbert would be forgotten, and the winding up of Tom's affairs, a tedious and odious process, be completed. Six months had gone by, spent in easy, amusing pleasure-travel; with here and there a long stay in any place that took their fancy, then fitting farther, always with nothing but their own curiosity and inclination to consult. This irregular holiday life was quite new to Kennedy. Fortunately he had not gone on drudging long enough to lose—as he would have lost at last—the natural relish for a break of the kind, and though an indefinite prolongation of this 'all play and no work' interlude he would have thought quite intolerable, ten years of laborious plodding had earned him the right to a very long vacation, and as such he regarded their twelve months' tour. This over, they would settle down, and he take up his landholder's life, which promised to be anything but one of idlesse.

Cressida was scarcely less happy. She was fond of travelling, and everything went smoothly. Her husband took all the trouble of arranging and piloting, made no fuss, and was always ready to follow her wishes in making out their route, nay, preferred her leading the way. *Æsthetic*, Joe was not, nor it was to be feared, with any amount of culture or length of years, could now hope to become; but he liked to see her

enjoyment of pictures and statues and things of beauty in general, as he might like to behold a child's delight in a toy-shop, without, for the life of him, being able to participate in such enthusiasm. Then, on the one hand, there was the absence of anything that would complicate or jar, however faintly, on their relations,—no social interruptions even,—whilst on the other, plenty of change of scene and agreeable variety of incident that kept boredom at a distance. Cressida, for her part, would, if asked, have declared herself willing for this sort of thing to go on for ever. As if this were possible; as if, even though their outward, artificial routine were kept up year after year, their inner, individual routine would thus remain unchanged. As well expect to keep a flower for ever half blown, or wish for the long summer days to last all the seasons round.

The first of March found them stopping at Sorrento. Cressida had expressed a vehement desire to revisit her old home; and her wishes were the laws that Kennedy loved to put into execution. She took a childlike pleasure in relating to him every particular of those past days; calling up every possible reminiscence; taking him to see the villa where they had lived; showing him her favourite walks, haunts, views; and dwelling interminably on those numberless minutiae of early life, which, like wine, acquire a rare and precious flavour by long keeping. Joe would listen patiently. Whether the story was interesting to him or uninteresting, he was content to hear her narrate. She had a way of talking that—meaning apart—it was a pleasure to listen to, as to the ripple of waves or the twitter of birds.

Spring was already far on, there in the South; and that evening

they lingered in the hotel-gardens, sitting out till nearly midnight on the bit of terrace overhanging the Mediterranean. The night sky was clear as glass, with a deep, dark, intangible hue. No moon, but stars (more of them and brighter than in our English heaven) shone to light up the silken sea. Like a lake the bay lay before them, circled by the sweeping promontories on either hand, stretching out to meet the boundary-line of mountain islands opposite. The wily influences of solitude, stillness, and beauty stole in upon the man sitting there in the face of a scene perhaps as enchanting as any the earth has to show. Joe had turned very silent—apathetic, thought Cressida wrongly—for his heart was rather full with a sort of emotion akin to awe, such a deep, stirring impression as he had felt sometimes when listening to the pealing organ in a church after dark. But on Cressida the alluring essence of an Italian landscape told very differently. It roused her, and excitement, wanting fresh vent, found it in sauciness and mischief, which infected her mood as she prattled away about old times and childish adventures, and the little changes that had come over Sorrento in seven years.

She perceived that Joe was feeling almost sentimental, which moved her still further to try to tease and torment him; and the more lazily unteasable he became, the more the skittish spirit took possession of her in her talk.

'They used to call me the Infanta of Sorrento in those days,' she said, smiling to herself.

'Infanta! what's that?'

'Stupid boy! A princess of Spain, of course.'

'But what had a parson's daughter to do with Spanish princesses?'

'Only that the parson's daughter was the child-queen of the place. Cressida always wanted to have her own way, and always got it too. Ah, Joe,' and she laughed, adding gravely, 'I was anything but a good girl in those days.'

'Weren't you? I daresay,' he replied, with perfect impassibility. 'What did you do? Climb and tumble down, tear your frocks, spill the ink, and eat green gooseberries?'

'Worse,' said Cressida, shaking her head ominously. 'As for those little iniquities—I was a lonely child, you see, and for those one needs brothers and sisters. I have always lived mostly with grown-up people, liked them best, and they liked me. Why, even then, I used to flirt most desperately. O, you've no idea!'

'Haven't I?' said Joe, nodding sagaciously, but with a profoundly resigned expression.

Cressida glanced up at him with the same tricky look in her eyes, as she continued:

'I so well remember, a few months before we left—I was just sixteen then—there was a young Oxonian staying here, who, in particular, was over head and ears in love with me.'

'Really!' ejaculated Joe indolently. He was listening with the same placid condescension as if she had been telling him a story about her doll.

'He used to take me out in a boat, a dear little cockle-shell with a sail, that papa kept. He and I had some memorable excursions, I can tell you.'

'Could he manage it?' asked Joe critically.

'I should think so. Why, he was in the University crew!' exclaimed Cressida indignantly. 'One day, though, we did manage to get swamped, all the same.'

'The young duffer!' was Joe's comment.

'No, not he; I was the duffer,' laughed Cressida. 'I thought I saw a nautilus sailing in its little shell, you know, and sprang up in my excitement. In a moment there we were, both struggling in the water. Luckily it was quite shallow, and my boatman at least six feet high. But I never thought of one or the other, and I can't describe to you my awful fright. I thought I *must* drown, and shrieked in a wild way. Then I heard his voice, thrilling with emotion, Joe, in my ear: "All right; don't be afraid; you are quite safe," etcetera; and he kept on repeating it to tranquillise me as he carried me ashore. You have no idea how touching that voice was.'

Joe laughed obediently.

'We got to land; but it was a desolate part of the coast, and miles from Sorrento by the road,' proceeded Cressida. 'There were some fishermen's cottages near, and I went in to get my things dried. In the mean time the weather had changed, a wind sprung up, and my companion thought the sea too high for me to return in the boat. So he walked all the way to the nearest village—several miles—to fetch some kind of carriage to drive me home. What a ramshackle conveyance that was! I remember his telling me—ah, so earnestly!—that he should never forget that drive. I said no more, I was afraid, should I, the jolting had shaken me so. Ah, I led him a life!'

Kennedy made a little impatient movement of his shoulders, which Cressida noted, saying slyly, 'You look as if you didn't care particularly about my reminiscences.'

'I'm not sure I can say that I do,' he returned awkwardly.

'Then you sha'n't hear any

more,' she said, with playful petulance, 'and the sequel to "My Oxonian," and how he made a fool of himself on my account, shall remain untold. He used to tell me I was his first love, and laid great stress upon it.'

'Cressida!' Joe got no further; but by her tone or manner, or something, she had succeeded in half provoking him at last.

'It's very wrong of you,' she resumed, coaxing; 'very unfair. It wasn't my fault that the "young duffer," as you very properly called him, chose to make much of the Infanta, overwhelm her with delicate attentions and presents and so on; and if, in spite of that, I didn't care a straw for him, could I help it?'

'Not that, certainly; but I imagine you did contrive to help letting him find it out;—perhaps helped him to think the contrary.'

'There, you are like all the rest,' she said lightly, but with a dash of earnest breaking through. 'You get vexed, you misunderstand, you overrate things. Now I told you I was a foolish girl; and you said that you liked me as I was, with all my folly and flightiness. Wasn't I foolish to believe you, dear?'

She had put her hands in his as she spoke, and bent forwards, looking up at him with a wistful smile. Her pale face had the transfigured look a pure, true feeling gave to it sometimes; her eyes—was it from the sea or the sky that they had caught their incomparable hue?—

'a light unknown,

A tender tint, more lucid far

Than all that eve had shown.

It seemed, between the gold and gray,
The far dawn of a faery day.'

'Don't make me repent it,' she added softly. 'If you look at me often so gravely as you did just now, I shall begin to fear

that you don't understand me better than the others, after all, but that—'

His lips touched hers and silenced them. At that moment it was given her to feel to the full, and delight in the assurance, that for this once she had inspired that complete, unwavering love and trust she desired.

For this once. She had asked, she had claimed it. Sorrow to her should she lose it! Let her, bearing in mind its worth, and that it is bound up with her own individual life, so deal with it as to make it her own for ever.

'What was the Oxonian's name?' asked Joe lazily, as they strolled up the avenue of orange-trees leading from the garden into the hotel.

'His name,' said Cressida, puzzled; 'his name—' She thought and thought, but in vain. 'Dear Joe,' she concluded penitently, but breaking into a peal of irresistible laughter, in which he joined, 'you may say what you like, but I've forgotten what it was.'

That same day was marked with a black letter in the annals of Greywell Court.

Elise de Saumarez was still at Monks' Orchard, though now on the eve of departure. During her last week she had had a numerous party of visitors staying there. Among them were Stephen Halliday (Alec the objectionable was at a safe distance with his regiment in Ireland) and Lewis Lefroy, who on the afternoon of that first of March started together to walk over to Greywell, where Lefroy was anxious to leave a card.

As they went along, taking the way across the fields, neither could escape many a chance local reminder of their former visit to

those parts some eight or nine months ago; and Lefroy, whose forte, or foible, was certainly petty psychology, could not refrain from giving his thoughts a tongue. In particular he gossiped about his friend Norbert Alleyne, and the singular apathy with which, so far as his information went, he had accepted his reverse.

'It shows how little one really knows what's inside a man,' he observed reflectively. 'Now I should have fancied that a fellow of that peculiar calibre, and who had offered himself up so unreservedly at this single shrine, would have been quite overwhelmed, for a time at least, by the desertion of his saint. But they say it hasn't had any effect upon him, after the first; not changed him in the least. He is in town and very busy, he says—taken to reading, and all that. One would almost think it had done him good—embittered him a little, perhaps; but that's to his advantage, I consider.' Lefroy thought it always improved people to be embittered—gave them tone.

'I never knew him at all,' said Halliday shortly.

'He was always rather odd and close, even with those who knew him best; but he and I were rather intimate at one time. I used to think there was something "rare and strange" in this silent idolatry of his for Miss Landon. Few men have it in them to be so fervent and faithful to *one* in these days. But I don't know what to say now.'

'Perhaps he has a general aptitude for the sort of thing,' said Halliday drily, 'which happened first to find this particular way of manifesting itself.'

Lefroy laughed aloud.

'Well, that may be,—an unsuspected talent for the game of hearts in general. If so, we may

soon expect to hear of his going all through it again with somebody else.'

'Is he at Greywell now?' asked Halliday indifferently. He found a kind of dry self-satisfaction in bearding a subject connected with Cressida, in coolly walking over and, so to speak, botanising on the grave of his ideal.

'No; he hasn't been there since, his sister told me. He doesn't care to be bothered, which is natural, and stayed up in town even for Christmas. They've a rather uncomfortable home, you know; the father's a regular Turk in his own family, and keeps all those poor girls in the most ridiculously rigid— Why, how d'ye do,' suddenly pulling up in his speech, and changing his tone, as, on reaching a stile at the corner of the field, they unexpectedly confronted two of the family under discussion, namely, Jeanie and Fan, returning from an afternoon ramble. Nimbly vaulting over the stile, Lefroy offered his hand to them, all with a neatness and promptitude that gave an almost dramatic effect to some of his movements.

The four walked on to Greywell together. The footpath between the two hedges was narrow, only allowing of double file. Somehow Lefroy and Jeanie fell in, side by side, instantly. Fan—who, ever since her first and never-forgotten lesson on the subject, had been inclined to take for granted that any two people might be in love with each other, however little excuse she could see for it—reluctantly submitted to drop into the rear with Halliday, for whom she cherished a distinct aversion or grudge for the part he had played in late events. Whatever that part had been, she chose to think he had blundered inexcusably. People like him prided themselves

on being better than the rest of the world. Much good came of it in practice!

But, as the other pair really did seem to enjoy their *tête-à-tête*, and for those under the Colonel's jurisdiction opportunities like the present were rare, Fan threw herself into the sisterly service of letting Jeanie and Lefroy get on in front, and diverting Halliday's attention by talking to him. What about was the puzzle. Fan was no adept at platitudes, and Halliday eschewed them systematically, except when social etiquette left him no choice. On the figure now by his side he scarcely bestowed a thought. True, he had not forgotten that little misadventure on the day of the picnic, but there was nothing to remind him of the force and earnestness that had blazed out and momentarily astonished him. He saw only a schoolgirl of seventeen—'sweet seventeen' was the last epithet Fan was able or anxious to appropriate—and if he noted anything remarkable about her appearance, it was the brownness of her gloveless hands—sunburnt, but small, well moulded, and as characteristic as any feature in our mechanism can well be.

Presently he observed that he thought they should have rain; but to propositions about the weather Fan vouchsafed no reply. It was as if by making them he had gone down another peg in her estimation, and he did not repeat the effort. The pause that followed would have been perpetual, but that Fan suddenly perceived that they were rapidly overtaking Jeanie and Mr. Lefroy, and within earshot of their conversation. Bent on taking off the attention of her companion, she made a wild and desperate push for it, asking abruptly,

'Were you ever in Russia?'

'In Russia?' he repeated, astonished. 'No; why?'

'It was only,' Fan stammered, hunting about in her mind how to account for her question, and rather at a loss, 'that I was reading a book about it the other day which made me wish I was there, and that just now I was thinking you had perhaps travelled a good deal, and might have been there, among other places,' she concluded ingeniously.

'I've travelled very little, on the contrary,' he replied. 'I never have, or expect to have, much time to spare for running about.'

'Ah, yes, of course; because you have something better and usefuller to do with yours,' said Fan hastily. She had heard formerly from Cressida of the sort of vocation in which he was engaged; moreover, that he was rather keen upon it, and the unlucky words had gushed from her almost involuntarily.

He laughed, and glanced up at her with careless surprise, not to say slight impatience of this catechism. His unresponsive manner would have checked her had she been taking thought in the least degree for the impression she was making, as he curtly replied,

'I hope so—many things.'

The ball of conversation, once started, must be kept up. Besides, Fan's thoughts had now taken another turn, inclining her, on her own account, rather to speak than be silent. She drew a long breath, and declared with emphasis,

'I think one would not mind being cooped up for ever in one place or one room, if one only was sure that some real good came of it to somebody.'

'Well, I don't know,' he said, half amused this time. 'You must allow me to differ from you there. I think there are a great

many people who mind it very much.'

'O yes, perhaps,' stammered Fan undaunted, 'people who don't take life in a serious way; but I didn't count those, of course.'

'Pray, what do you call "not taking life in a serious way"?'

'People who can make their private amusement the Dan and Beersheba of every day of their existence,' returned Fan directly, 'and who talk as if there was nothing to be done in the world that was of any use. I never could understand that, or be contented in their way. Only, boxed up in the country, as we are, and in a house like ours, where we scarcely know anything, except by guess or accident, of what is going on outside, why, one might be ever so disgusted with living a perfectly useless life, there would be no help for it.'

'I think you will generally find without difficulty persons enough, quite ready and able to dispose of any superfluous activity or time you may happen to have on your hands, and be anxious to put at their service,' said Halliday provokingly.

'I know, I know,' replied Fan, somewhat irate. 'Why, Millie and Jeanie and I might sit in a row, and knit mittens from morning till night; I daresay we should always find people to wear them. But that's not what I mean. Nobody ever does seem to understand why even women should wish to find out the best things to be done, and the best way of doing them, and to give their work to the people who want it most, and will be really and truly the better for it.'

'Well, when you have succeeded in finding all that out and for certain, we shall all of us be very much obliged to you if you will let us know,' returned Halliday

unmercifully, who, although he had often inwardly wondered and thundered at the eternal selfishness of charming women, and the self-contented way in which, as a rule, they hold aloof when they can from truth and trouble, could not, it appeared, be brought to regard Fan's predicament with proper gravity. She thought this flippancy on his part very perverse. He might have seen that she was in earnest. To have the leading of one's own life, and to be able to turn it to account in some practical, tangible manner for the good of one's fellow-creatures, had always appeared to Fan as the grand desideratum for contentment; she was perpetually on the *qui vive* as to ways and means, and it had struck her that she might get something to the purpose out of her present companion. She did not give up, even now, and the strain of conversation changed by degrees, turning upon a variety of topics which we politely call 'of general interest,' but on whose genuine interest to any one in particular it would certainly be unsafe to presume. Now as Fan seemed to be tolerably well informed as well as eager on such matters, Halliday, feeling more and more as if he were listening to the frank chatter of a lively intelligent lad, became gradually more communicative. He good-naturedly suffered himself to be drawn out, even to enlighten her on the subject of some of his favourite ideas and projects.

He had his hobbies, of course; but Fan, who from what she had heard had rather expected to find a knight-errant or an enthusiast in the cause of progress, was being rapidly set right. Lefroy and Jeanie walked on in front, talking of trivialities fervently (he was giving her sketches from his autobiography); the two others

behind, discussing burning questions soberly. Fan must content herself with making out that he was quite satisfied with the field he had chosen for his labours; it was something that he should regard the crusade against ignorance, in which, one way or another, they were engaged, as the most honourable distinction of the century. Her youthful impatience would have preferred a little more enthusiasm about institutions, measures, or to have special ones pointed out to her as infallible and speedy cures for the special evils existing on the face of the earth. It was damping to have to fall back on a few broad, main facts. However, anything, she thought, was better than dreaming; though we have to start again from such a sober, safe, but, to her, novel position as this, that honest individual efforts in a right direction can hardly be thrown away, even if they end in disappointment, since failure itself may teach the secrets of success, which he who runs may read.

The conversation which had begun by so artificial a start now flowed easily and naturally enough. Fan, at least, was quite wrapped up in it. This was what she liked: to be talked to seriously, sensibly, without any of that 'chaff' condescending which it was too often her lot to encounter as an *enfant terrible*, or of the 'chaff' complimentary with which as a young lady she was sometimes attacked by young men desirous to please, but whose ideas of pleasing and hers did not coincide. There was never any perceptible difference in her manner towards women and men, and she liked the latter to be as frank, plain-spoken, and unconscious with her as with each other.

The prophesied rain came on, but true to her Joan of Arc dispo-

sition Fan did not regard it, disdaining even to share Halliday's umbrella as they trudged on, and flatly declining Lefroy's aid at every stile, much to his discomfiture. He was so fond of helping ladies over stiles.

Her boots were muddy, her skirts also, her hair wet and blown about. Cressida would not have been seen thus for worlds; but how should Fan think of it, absolutely indifferent as she was to the personal impression she might be producing?

Greywell was reached only too soon, and the visitors marched into the drawing-room, where the whole family mustered to 'entertain' them. The Colonel's presence forbade the slightest approach to ease or expansion. Lewis Lefroy exerted himself to rattle on agreeably; but the three girls had become suddenly tongue-tied, and it was impossible to get beyond the merest commonplaces of conversation. Even tea failed to spread a little exhilaration over the circle. In the midst of the visit the unpleasant calm was unpleasantly broken by the arrival of a telegram for Colonel Alleyne.

Telegrams were of rare occurrence at Greywell—that was not a family with which anybody ever seemed in a hurry to communicate—and the Colonel was watched with a certain anxiety by his womankind as he opened it. His countenance changed ominously. He rose and walked towards the door. Mrs. Alleyne made a flurried start, as if to follow him; he waved her back impatiently; but in his own haste and evident confusion let the paper fall. With a rapid movement Fan picked it up and handed it back to him; but she had caught sight of its contents. Her eye and her father's met, and she followed him, unforbidden, as he left the room.

Halliday and Lefroy exchanged a glance. The latter perceived at once that 'something dreadful had happened,' as he would have expressed it, and both rose to take leave. Mrs. Alleyne, flurried still, began to expostulate and apologise. It was nothing at all. She was sure there was no alarming news, or the Colonel would have told them. Would they not finish their tea? This parley delayed them a few minutes. Lefroy, truth to tell, was burning with curiosity to know what the matter was.

Fan reëntered almost directly, and signified to her mother that the Colonel wanted to speak to her. As the door closed on Mrs. Alleyne, the girl said steadily but with an effort,

'The telegram is—is from Mr. Marriott. Norbert is not well.'

Lefroy, much concerned, began proffering general readiness and desire to know if he could be of any use. Halliday, he hardly knew why, seemed to catch the note of some alarm beyond the usual panic sudden illness may cause. He got Lefroy away at once. As they were all in the hall outside, he turned to Fan to say quietly and apart,

'Can I telegraph for you, or anything?'

'No; we are going up to-night.'

She pressed her hands tightly to her face for a moment.

'Is it so bad?' Halliday inquired. 'There is no danger, surely?'

Fan suddenly took her hands from her face; there were no tears in her eyes, but an indescribable something in her look had put him on the right tack almost before she answered aside to him,

'Danger for his mind—yes!'

For all the toughness of his three-and-thirty years' life-ap-

prenticeship, for all his masculine philosophy, Halliday was a little staggered, and could think for the moment of nothing to say. Perhaps it was kindest to say nothing.

'Dear, what an unfortunate *contretemps*!' began Lefroy, directly they were out in the road. 'I have the most distinct aversion to the telegraph. At least, people really should not send bad news in that way. I never felt more awkward in my life. But women get so easily frightened. And he's an unaccountable fellow; often up and down.'

'One saw it must have been rather serious, for the uncle to telegraph so unexpectedly.'

'Yes, but people do knock up all of a sudden, now and then.'

'I fear it's a brain-attack of some kind,' explained Halliday. 'They hinted as much to me just now.'

'A brain-attack! O, that's bad indeed, the worst!' said Lefroy, as deeply concerned as it was in his nature to be; and he reflected gravely. 'Do you know,' he resumed presently, with a puzzled look, 'I now understand what it was I was afraid of for him several months ago. He looked, now and then, like a man who is burning the candle at both ends. But I fancied it had all blown over, as I was telling you. Poor fellow! What a terrible misfortune for them all if things turn badly!'

'Terrible indeed!'

'Is it in the family, I wonder?'

'The Colonel seems eccentric.'

'That he does; and that youngest girl, Fan, is an oddity, I am sure. But this is really most distressing news. I can't get over it at all.'

Distressing though it was, there was something not displeasing to

Lefroy in being the first to hear of it, and to communicate it at Monks' Orchard, where Elise had a dinner-party that night.

The same evening Colonel and Mrs. Alleyne went up to town, taking Fan. More correctly speaking, it was Fan who took them. Partly from want of practice, partly from perturbation, they were helpless as children to shift for themselves, and but for their pioneer would have missed their train, started in a wrong one, and lost their belongings. They reached London at last, and drove to Norbert's lodgings, Fan all the way consumed by the impatience with which one goes forward to meet a mysterious evil. Mr. Marriott was there, on the look-out, and came to meet them at the door. At the sight of his expression, which boded no good tidings, Mrs. Alleyne became hysterical. Fan, though her heart was going like a sledge-hammer, kept a good countenance. They were all crowded together for a minute in the half-lit narrow lobby inside, and a short passage of arms ensued that Fan remembered long. Her father and uncle met for a moment with the look of intimate hostility of near, but not dear, relations. Some rapid questions and answers came. Fan caught the words 'a sudden attack,' 'alarming symptoms,' 'slight improvement.' Then Mr. Marriott began to the Colonel abruptly,

'You wish to see him, of course?'

'Of course.'

'Well, what I have to tell you is this: you must not think of it for a moment.'

'How not think of it?' The Colonel flared up instantly at the peremptory tone.

'To be plain with you, he is in a state when all painful and exciting impressions are highly dangerous, and *must* be avoided at

every price. That is the first thing to be thought of now,' said the banker, concluding with sharp significance, 'You, his father, ought to know best the sort of effect your presence would be likely to have upon him.'

The Colonel was thunderstruck, deeply exasperated, but tongue-tied, half-abashed, and for this once at the mercy of his brother-in-law, who spoke authoritatively and to the point. Mr. Marriott turned from him to the tearful Mrs. Alleyne, and next to Fan, the only self-possessed person present, saying, 'But I think, perhaps, if his sister—'

Fan nodded, and followed her uncle up-stairs, leaving the others in the sitting-room below.

'Will he know me?' she asked.

'Probably. It is impossible to say beforehand whether seeing you will do him good or harm. But you may go in; the doctor is with him now. I fear he is on the eve of a terrible illness; but we must do what we can. Try not to seem flurried, and talk to him and answer him, whatever he says, as if he were quite himself; that is, if you can.'

She went in. Norbert was up and dressed, and pacing the room restlessly, gazing before him with eyes into which an extraordinary change had come since Fan saw them last—grown magnetically keen, at once fatigued and unquiet.

'Who's this?' he said, with a nervous start at the click of the door-handle.

'Only I, Fan,' she said, coming forwards, and without the slightest agitation in tone or manner. He turned away with a hasty gesture, as of annoyance at being surprised and interrupted.

'You didn't expect to see me, perhaps,' she added, 'or not so soon.'

'They said you would come,'

he answered abruptly. 'I've been ill, you know.'

'Yes, but you're better than you were, aren't you?' she said cheerfully. 'Tell me about it.'

Norbert had ceased his restless walk. He flung himself into a chair, and an expression as of a sense of deadly exhaustion overspread his features as he answered her, in a hurried, incoherent manner.

'O, I should have been well, and long before this, if only they would let me rest; but that's not to be, it seems.'

Fan was watching him acutely. He kept casting nervous, sharp glances round the room.

'Well, it's come to this now,' he said, speaking with the same quick vehemence, so unnatural to him, 'that I'm set upon by sights and sounds that worry me, hunt me, till I lose myself or something. I suppose you'll say it's fancy; but there they are. Then at night, when the light is out, my thoughts do their best to murder me. It's the story over again of the villain who treated his prisoners to that, in revenge—kept them from sleeping, you know. It made them mad at last.'

'You're tired and overdone, I expect,' she rejoined promptly and quietly; 'that may make you see things wrong.'

He sank his head in his hands, saying listlessly, 'Yes, that's it; tired to death, Fan, till my head runs wild; it won't let me alone.' He looked up suddenly; his expression was odd and uneasy, she noticed his rapid changes of countenance, and a feverish light in his eyes as they wandered about, and he began speaking fast and excitedly. 'I tell you there was a face in the glass this morning—Mine, you'll say—Not like it,' and he laughed; 'one that

might have haunted the devil, given him bad dreams. And yet I don't know; my brain gives me the slip some days, I suspect. As to that picture—'

He stopped. His eye was resting on a spot on the wall where hung an engraving, Fan remembered of old—a graceful portrait of a pretty face, by some unknown hand, christened the May Queen, and that Norbert had lighted upon somewhere years ago, and bought, because of its curious resemblance to Cressida. He resumed the next moment :

'I've let my fancy play tricks with that once too often. I got rest in that odd way lately; it was better than opium. But now it moves and changes and comes down without my inviting.' He broke off, glanced at his sister doubtfully, adding, 'Childish rubbish, isn't it? Fan, what do you suppose it all means?'

Fan put her hand in his, and Norbert, with a violent effort to command his nerves, tried hard to look steadily at the object before him, as it were to force down the mists of feverish hallucination that troubled his mind. His physical strength gave way in the exertion, his features relaxed, his eye grew vacant, but still remained fixed on the spot with a vague and distant gaze, as he muttered inaudibly to himself :

'Dead, I think—but no release allowed—like me.'

The light, as he sat there, fell full on his face. Its sharpened outlines, strained, metamorphosed expression, that unavailing, instinctive struggling for self-mastery, painful as the efforts of one caught and drowning in a current, were telling enough, even to Fan's inexperience, of such deep mischief at work, and insecurity as to what might be impending, that the sense of it turned her cold and

sick. She was silent for a few minutes, then presently observed, 'If the picture worries you, hanging there, I should cover it up. Or better still, take it down,' she added, rising composedly.

Norbert watched her with indifference as she lifted the portrait from its nail on the wall, and put it away. He began to laugh, saying,

'If you're going to try and banish all the queer visitors that have found their way into this place of torment, you'll have enough to do, I can tell you. People say it's because I've been too much alone. Pretty company I should have made. I held out while I could,—but now it's like a tide carrying me out to sea,' he concluded wearily. He leant back his head, remained with closed eyes, for a few moments, then rousing himself suddenly, looked at Fan with a puzzled, surprised air, and asked,

'When did you come? Yesterday?'

'In the evening,' she replied evasively.

'Because—listen here—' he began, fixing his eyes on her intently. Once more he gathered his forces, strove to collect himself, straining his will to the utmost to beat against the stream of confusion, and fix his attention so as to give clear expression, whilst he could, to what was flitting through his mind. 'You'd best not stay long—I shall wear the life out of you—I'm nervous and out of sorts, and lose hold over my thoughts and everything sometimes. I shall get round right enough, I daresay—at least, that's what I've been thinking; but I've had a bad time of it the last day or two till I—' His voice had grown weak in speaking, his head seemed to fail him, the sense of it driving a singular intensity of ex-

pression into his eyes as he hesitated, unable to continue. But Fan caught him up at once, saying,

'Let me stay for the present, or until you're better. I may as well be here as at home, you know.'

Already her familiar voice and ways had reconciled him to her presence, though at first he had seemed irritated by her coming. Something in her manner soothed him particularly. With the sharpened, suspicious sensitiveness of illness and fever, he was quick to perceive that she, unlike the others he had had around him, talked and behaved to him in the natural, placid, ordinary way. He fretted at her leaving him presently, and would take no word but

her own positive promise to return to him by and by.

'That young lady,' said the doctor—who had been a silent witness of their interview—as the family group were hastily debating below as to the arrangements and measures, 'may stay as long as she is willing.'

But the same night the cloud deepened and fell, and for the days that followed the likelihood seemed that care and uncertainty would be cut very short, anxiety met by the sharpest, surest remedy, and fear be extinguished at once and for ever.

That crisis passed; days, weeks, went by, and the danger, though still lurking near, was less imminent, and an idea of recovery allowed to arise. But of what sort?

(To be continued.)

THE DEVONSHIRE SAVAGES.

BY A NATIVE.

THERE are spots on the moon and there are flies in amber. It need not, then, be a matter for great surprise that there are 'savages' in beautiful Devonshire. In fact it might not be difficult to find savages in many other parts of the country, judging by the testimony—the recent testimony unfortunately—of our police, petty sessional, and assize courts. There are young savages and old ones among us. For the former there is some hope whilst School Boards continue to exercise their functions. The old savages are, it is to be feared, irreclaimable, for the reason that they are mostly beyond civilising influences, and society can only look forward to their gradual extinction by the process of natural decay.

The savages who are the subject of this paper are of a peculiar type. They are in fact landed proprietors, living on their own freehold estate, and in a detached residence situated in a picturesque part of the country. It was rather more than six years since that they first brought themselves prominently under general public notice, though they had for some time previously made their influence 'felt' in their own immediate neighbourhood; and they have since done their best from time to time to maintain their reputation. It was about a couple of years after the special occasion to which I have alluded that, being about to pay a visit to Devonshire, it occurred to me that I would endeavour to see the notorious savages of the county. I had, how-

ever, forgotten the exact locality in which they lived, and thinking that a lady friend of mine—who I thought was specially 'well up' in West-country lore, and who had, I believed, specially studied the habits and goings-on of West-country people—might be able to assist me, I wrote to ask her if she had ever heard of 'the Devonshire savages,' and could remember their whereabouts. Not knowing, evidently, that I was a 'native,' she informed me that she had no recollection of any particular community of savages in Devonshire, but she believed that the expression 'the Devonshire savages' was applied very generally to the common people of Devon, in order to indicate the roughness of their manners. This was a terrible slander, for which I was totally unprepared; for I will venture to say—'though I,' as a native, 'say it who shouldn't'—that throughout the British Islands there does not exist a finer, a gentler, and a more simple-hearted race of men than your genuine Devonshire peasants. I am, however, quite free to confess that this character does not apply to the singular family of Devonians of whom I propose to give some account in this place.

One of their not very remote ancestors was, it is averred, a kind of Diogenes. He at any rate, if not a philosopher, was eccentric, and lived in a tub. Common report indeed says that he was a lunatic, and it has been suggested that the tendency of lunacy to become hereditary may account for the strange doings of the existing

family of savages. Local opinion, however, inclines to the belief that the noun plural which implies the reverse of honest people would more fittingly explain the peculiarities of this family than any other expression.

I have said that they are landed proprietors, living in their own 'house' on their own freehold. How they came into possession of this property I have never been able to discover. But in spite of their notorious misdoings there they are, and there they appear likely to remain. Their estate consists of some thirty or forty acres of land, which they farm—its value, I have been given to understand, being about 40*l.* per annum. They have, or recently had, live stock in horses, sheep, pigs, bullocks, ducks, and fowls. The 'estate' consists of eleven fields, besides an orchard, and it has been 'in the family' for about a quarter of a century. There is a cottage-garden attached to the family mansion, in which are grown various vegetables that supply the family with what they cannot easily steal from their neighbours. When, for whom, or under what circumstances the cottage was built I have never been able to discover. Some people say that it was originally an old barn with an extemporised chimney. It might have been at one time a labourer's cottage; but I incline to the belief that it was erected by the savages themselves after an artistic model of their own. The 'oldest inhabitant' of the parish in which it is situated, not a hundred miles from the Lapford station of the North Devon Railway, cannot remember to have seen glass in the 'windows'; and it is very many years since that the apertures, which by courtesy may claim that designation, were known to retain anything like window-shape. Their

fine airy and *négligé* condition in their best days may be seen by the illustration. The savages never appear to have liked the confinement and restraint imposed by glass, and it was only during exceptionally cold or exceptionally rough weather that they cared to fill the apertures in the walls with an unhinged door, an old board, a sack or two, or other temporary makeshifts.

On the occasion of my visit to the hovel, however, it had become such a ruin as to have almost lost the appearance of a dwelling-place. Here it is, just as I saw it. The stones and cob of which the walls consisted were torn and rent in all directions, as if the structure had been subjected to a furious bombardment. Huge gaping apertures were seen on all sides. What had been doorways had become widened, shapeless, and ragged breaches in the walls. The 'front' doorway had assumed the shape of a rough irregular archway, the upper part of which was so torn and loose that it had to be supported by a beam placed crosswise, and kept up against the stones and cob by wooden props. The upper parts of the walls were especially ruinous, whilst the thatch was broken and torn in all directions.

The substructure of this miserable ruinous dwelling stood in a hollow or depression in the ground, and was situated at about the centre of a kind of clearing surrounded by a hedge and skirted by tall trees. Admission to this yard or clearing was gained through a gateway which led in from one of the high-roads of the village. The hovel itself consisted of two apartments, one over the other. The lower one, the deepest part of which was something like a hole or pit in the ground, was the den of the savages—drawing-room, dining-room, kitchen, scullery, and

bedroom in one. Here the whole family ate, drank, washed, cooked, and slept. Bed or bedstead, as these things are generally understood, there was none. When I saw it the whole was full of straw, and here, as I have said, every member of the household slept—father, mother, sons, daughters, and the children of the latter. The family consisted, in fact, of eleven persons when I made their acquaintance.

The grandfather of the circle was at that time, I believe, about sixty years of age. His wife was perhaps a few years younger. Their eldest son was somewhere between thirty and forty. The next was a daughter of thirty summers. Then followed two other interesting young ladies, aged respectively, I believe, twenty-five and twenty-three. Next below these came a boy of about twelve, one of about



THE HOME OF ELEVEN SAVAGES.

eight, another between five and six, and a baby boy of two summers.

The eleven herded together in the manner I have stated, and their character and propensities were just what their mode of life would suggest. No respectably-dressed person could venture to pass their hovel without being assailed with the most horrible epithets, and not unfrequently assaulted brutally with mud, sticks, stones, or in fact anything that came first to hand. They

soon became the terror of the whole country-side; and curiously enough the worst of the set were the female members of the family. At one time the latter actually attended the parish church, dressed in the most gaudy style imaginable, and accompanied occasionally by their brothers. But a feud arose between them and the worthy vicar, who on one occasion was so incensed at the conduct of the eldest of the sons, that he seized him and administered severe castigation. From this time the

savages ceased attending church altogether; but they took every opportunity of insulting the parson whenever he chanced to pass their way, and swore eternal vengeance against this good man in particular, and against his profession in general. The suspiciousness with which they greeted me on the occasion of my visit to them arose, I believe, from their having at first mistaken me for a 'passen,' and they appeared both pleased and relieved on my informing them, in reply to a query to that effect, that I was not of the cloth.

For a certain period they attempted a little farming, and even took their produce to dispose of it to a market which was not very distant from their abode. But after a time they appear to have reflected that it would be easier to purloin their neighbours' goods than to work for themselves; so they pilfered and robbed their neighbours in every possible way and on every possible occasion. They made no distinction, robbing the poor cottagers as well as the wealthy farmers in all the country round. They would even steal vegetables from labourers' gardens. One of their favourite amusements—suggested, no doubt, by the desire to combine business with pleasure—was to drive the cattle of neighbouring farmers into their own fields, and then, upon the pretence that these cattle had 'strayed,' demand compensation from the owners. Indeed, one of the most recent of the public appearances of these North Devon savages—at the sessions held at the Castle of Exeter, not many months ago, before the Earl of Devon and other magistrates—was to answer a charge of obtaining money—to wit, the sum of two shillings and sixpence—by false pretences from a farmer in

the neighbourhood, whose pigs, the savages declared, had, to the number of six, been 'trespassing' amongst their ricks. The sum was claimed, and, it seems, paid by the farmer in question, who was under the belief that his pigs had in reality committed the damage which was alleged. He was subsequently informed, however, that the savages had themselves driven his pigs amongst their ricks in order to extort money from him. Three of the notorious family were on this particular occasion indicted for cheating the farmer in the manner indicated, but two of them escaped owing to some technical flaw in the indictment, the third being convicted and sentenced to two months' hard labour—a very slight punishment, considering the numerous occasions on which this particular savage—the ringleader of the whole set—had been convicted of similar and worse offences.

It will be supposed from what has been stated that these notorious people were, before the date of the particular prosecution just referred to, no strangers to the processes of the law. Indeed, prior to the year 1873 they had been so frequently 'summoned' before the county magistrates, that a special representation on their account was made to the Home Secretary. Inquiry was then instituted, and a return was ordered of the number of convictions which up to the date of the inquiry had been recorded against the savages. It actually appeared from this return that, for divers offences too numerous to particularise here, they had been between them *convicted* no less than fifty times. But their repeated incarcerations had produced no beneficial effect upon them, and indeed they only became hardened in their sins and wrong-doings.

It appears that every inducement which has been offered to these people to sell their land has proved unavailing, and hence there is no means of driving them forth from the neighbourhood in which their presence has become an intolerable infliction. The most perfect isolation exists between them and the inhabitants of the parish in which they live. Their hovel has sunk into a most ruinous condition, and it cannot long withstand the assaults of the weather. How the tenants will fare when, on some more than usually stormy night, it is laid in a ruinous heap, it is impossible to say. There is no one in the neighbourhood of the savages who would let them

a house, nor could a house be built in a day. They would have to take refuge in one of their own hayricks until they could extemporise other shelter.

Such as these abandoned people have been described they appear likely to remain; for they have resisted every civilising and humanising influence which has been brought to bear upon them with the object of improving them. They are in very truth irreclaimable savages, having, unhappily, no one redeeming quality as a set-off against their viciousness and depravity—savages, in fact, of the utterly bad type which is, alas, still to be found in certain parts of civilised countries.

COUNTRY LIFE IN GREECE.

THERE is a little town, almost a village, named Vostizza, situated on the north side of the Peloponessus between Patras and Corinth, which has preserved its original character in a remarkable degree. Whilst Athens is but a copy of European cities, this at a glance is still Grecian, and the delight of artists. Nature has given it every advantage in its beautiful shore-line, and on the summit of the downs, under a sapphiresky, rise a coquettish-looking crown of white houses, shining in the sun. High mountains limit the view to the south; to the right and left stretch out plains covered with myrtles, vines, and olives; two roaring torrents cut through the rich vegetation; and when in the dry season their bed of white stones is left bare, clumps of oleanders enliven it with rosy blossoms.

The port is small, but the water is deep and always calm. Two or three caïques ride at anchor around the pier, which is formed of large stones heaped on one another, and often covered by the waves. Four or five newly-built warehouses serve as docks for the richer proprietors of the country; and five or six dirty cabins, built in the hollow of the rock, are partly hidden by the famous springs of which Pausanias speaks, and by an immense plane-tree, which the war of independence has rendered celebrated. It was in the hollow of this tree that the Greeks shut up their prisoners after the insurrection of 1821; a door was fastened to the entrance, thus making it the safest prison in the town, and holding about ten men. Great

animation characterises the scene on the days when the steamer arrives twice in the week: the unhappy travellers are hurried into the boats, amid the vociferations of the boatmen, the cries of the hawkers, of the idlers, and those who in the true Greek character come to seek and to tell some new thing.

It is, however, a wise thing before landing to have acquired some experience of Oriental ways, and to have learned to disdain comfort, or it is quite probable that the traveller can neither eat nor drink what is set before him. The bread is without leaven, unsalted, and half baked; and as to the wine, which would be first-rate in quality, it is wholly spoiled by the practice of adding a large quantity of resin in order to make it keep, thus rendering the fine juice of the grape black, thick, and very bitter. At every meal there is a so-called soup of fish and tomatoes, with many lemons and oil. Other courses of plain boiled fish, boiled mutton, rice cooked in oil, with the ever-present lemon, a salad of boiled vegetables, and finally hard chalky cheese made of goats' milk, and intimating very plainly to the nasal organs the buckskin in which it has been kept. There is no variety in the *menu*, excepting on fast-days, which, by order of the Greek religion, are kept on a hundred and fifty days out of the three hundred and sixty-five; then olives and salad are only permitted. For heretics caviare is added; such a thing as animal food is never thought of. The beds may also be described as an iron frame with a

mattress of uncarded wool and mosquito curtains for their only ornament.

But how picturesque are the costumes that greet the eye! In Athens it is daily more and more rare to meet with anything but the ordinary European dress; in these small towns the inhabitants preserve faithfully their old traditions. Let us walk into the streets on Sunday to see the Greek dress in its brilliancy; there is a variety and luxury perfectly astonishing when it is considered that all the riches of many lie in what they wear. The fustanella, a sort of white-cotton petticoat, fastened round the waist in a thousand folds, is the same for the palikari and the peasant, and is unornamented. The belt, always of silk, is wide and long, embroidered with gold. The waistcoat is of the greatest variety, of black velvet or any coloured silk, with round buttons to match, and braided in the most fantastic patterns—as a wit remarked, ‘a ball of string gone into fits.’ A very short vest sometimes leaves the neck open, or is fastened by a double button. This is the richest part of the costume; the sides and back are covered with embroidery of silk mingled with gold and silver. In the dress of some rich people the original stuff is entirely hidden under a mass of gold braid, such an article costing about seventy pounds, and wide open sleeves, also embroidered, show the silk shirt. Gaiters fall over a patent-leather boot, meeting the silk trousers below the knee, where they are fastened by silk garters, which are generally a *chef-d'œuvre* of exquisite workmanship. The fez is the headgear for all alike, only varying in the richness of the black, blue, or gold tassel, sometimes fastened by a diamond clasp.

Few women have preserved

Greek attire; they have bowed down to the fashions of Paris in most of the towns, but at Delphi and around Mount Parnassus some peasants retain the distinctive character. Richer even in ornament than those of their husbands, they are a family treasure, transmitted from generation to generation. The young women, with the long plaits of black hair falling over their shoulders, adorn themselves on the days of great religious solemnity. At the occasion of a marriage a very long silk chemise is bound round the waist with a belt and silver clasp; the mantle, open in front, falls straight down, without sleeves, showing the neck; and a bright coloured apron descends to the ankle. Buckles of precious stones or of chased metal and other rich ornaments fasten the chemise, whilst necklaces of antique coins ornament the neck, the brow, and the hair, fastening back an exquisitely embroidered veil.

That ancient custom—it might almost be called worship—of the Greeks, dancing, is as popular as ever among the peasants, and no festival-day passes without its indulgence. The graceful supple forms suit it admirably, and some are always renowned for their skill in leading the chorus and for the lightness of their steps. It seems an easy exercise, but is in reality very complicated. Thirty or forty young men collect in the open air, and joining hands form a line, advancing, bending, unrolling, extending, and pressing together, obedient to the cadenced rhythm of a song which they all repeat. The voices rise and fall as the steps are slow or quick. At times the palikari who heads the chain gives a signal, when each lets go his neighbour's hand, which he held above his head, turns round, and takes that of the one

following, and so on through the circle. The rich costumes and variegated colours make a scene of changing beauty: it is the ancient *ormos*, of which classic authors speak, and though there exist many other dances this is the most popular, and has been transmitted for ages with perfect fidelity. The higher classes seldom consent to mix in choruses so dear to their ancestors; the waltz and the quadrille have taken the place, and real European balls are frequently given in all the towns, which have few attractions for those who are in search of originality.

Much has been said in praise of Grecian beauty, and the men are handsome in every sense of the word; we might well imagine them to have been the models of Phidias and Praxiteles. Their large eyes, black as jet, sparkle with glances of fire, whilst the long silky eyelashes soften the expression and give a dreamy appearance of melancholy. Their teeth are small, white, and well set; a fine regular profile, a pale-olive complexion, and a tall elegant figure realise an accomplished type of distinction. As to the women, they seem to have left physical perfection to the men; some possess fine eyes and hair, but as a rule they have bad figures, and some defect in the face generally spoils the good features. It is among them, however, that the old Oriental customs are most strictly preserved: whilst the men are gradually undergoing the process of civilisation they in a moral point of view remain stationary, and are just as they were fifty years ago.

It may indeed be said that with the exception of Athens the women possess no individual existence, and count as nothing in society; the men have reserved every

privilege for themselves, leaving to their helpmates the care of the house and family. In the towns, where servants are kept, they are of the poorest class of peasants, who know nothing and receive miserable wages. The families are generally large—seven or eight little children demand a mother's constant attention. The morning begins by directing the work of each servant, repeating the same thing a hundred times, scolding, screaming, even beating them, to be understood. In the evening, when the children are sleeping, if there remain some little time, the poor worn-out mother sits down to her spinning-wheel to spin silk, to sew or knit, or, if it be summer-time, to look after her silkworms and cocoons, happy if she has not to do the work of her incompetent servants over again.

Such days leave little time for pleasure or the instruction of their children; indeed, they never think of that. The children are left completely to themselves, running over the house in a state of nature, wallowing in the mud, among the stones, or in the water, not fearing the hot rays of the sun, and soon learning to walk without leading-strings. Everything grows under the favouring sky of Greece, like the thistle-down which the wind carries away and sows on its passage, to burst forth in the sun's rays. Happy for the mother when her young ones reach the age of seven; they are then sent to the parish school, which is now established in every town and village.

It might well be imagined that some women would absolutely refuse such an existence, but not one seems to harbour the thought. They have always a sad air of resignation, as if their eyes were fixed on an ideal after which they dreamed and wept; but at their

first words it is apparent that all feeling is dead within them, under the influence of long-continued habit. There is neither comfort, affection, nor anything like happiness in the home; and yet the only aim of the young girls is to be married. Such a thing as an old maid cannot be found. Illusion soon vanishes after marriage; but they learn to live as their mothers did—for their husband, their children, or the riches of the house, leading a hard monotonous existence, but free from all blame. The grandmothers are the only persons who can rest; they live in their son-in-law's house, and eat, chatter, or frighten their grandchildren with comic grimaces and remonstrances, counting out one by one the perfumed balls of the *comboloï* or chaplet, which is carried by both Turks and Greeks for a distraction. Their presence is accepted with indifference as a duty, and when they die the tranquil philosophy of the national character soon consoles the mourners.

Every small town possesses one or more bands of music, which strongly resemble those of Turkey. The most popular are the *tavoulia* or tambourines. Three gipsies compose the orchestra; one has a thin long reed made into a fife, from which such sharp prolonged notes are drawn as would seem to pierce the tympanum; the two others accompany it with their voices and tambourines covered with bells. This partnership produces an indescribable want of harmony; thus the people, who know nothing of true melody, are enchanted by it—the young ones especially can conceive of no pleasure without the *tavoulia*. The performers are dirty sordid vagabonds, greedy of gain, and thieves; yet when they make their appearance in a town the cry resounds through the streets, all the

idlers follow them, the children gaze on them with admiration, and such a noise of screams, groans, and hisses ensues, that the police have forbidden the entrance of this barbarous orchestra into the streets during the daytime.

When there is to be a picnic-party among the young men, these bands are hired to add to the amusement. On the first Monday in Lent it is very customary for thirty or forty to choose a small isolated house in the country, which is literally filled with provisions suitable for a feast, not forgetting wine and raki, or spirits. The *tavoulia* arrive and seat themselves on the floor, on a carpet opposite the table, and begin their horrid concert. An orgy ensues, the guests roar as they like, singing and screaming together; the love of noise in this low narrow room degenerates into madness. They stave in the casks, burst the wine-skins, break the plates and glasses, insult the musicians, and stick heavy pieces of money on to their black foreheads, renewing them as they fall off. Returning slowly in the evening, with the band at their head, others join the troop, mingle their cries with the exhausted guests, until they disperse to their homes.

Though their music and singing are decidedly disagreeable to a refined ear, they have a popular poetry of much interest—songs which have been transmitted for generations, boasting of no science, but having a simple expression and true natural feeling. Listening to a young Greek reciting these vigorous songs joined to a wild harmony, it is not difficult to guess what sort of men composed them, or under what terrible circumstances they were written. They are chiefly songs of the Klephtes, war-cries of the war of independence, or love-songs in a

tender plaintive rhythm, graceful and touching. Never does wine receive the honours of poetry—the fact is that the people are thoroughly temperate, and chiefly drink water. There are some legends of saints or stories of mythological fables; but these pieces, belonging to the Middle Ages, are buried in the provinces, and might perhaps, after long search, be discovered in the library of some ancient monastery.

They are all heard with most effect under the roof of a cabin, in the solitude of the mountain, where shepherds and palikaris meet, far from the towns. Here, weary of the dance and seated round the fire, one begins to sing, others listen, and soon, if the subject touch the heart, each learns it, and thus it passes from generation to generation. The spectacle of grand mountains spread before them, the sea-breeze, the clear azure sky, and pure beauty of the nights, the indistinct murmur of the wind breathing through the valleys, and the feeling of independence so dear to the soul of the Greek, give rise to the inspirations which may be traced through these uncouth rhapsodies, strange enough to the civilised ear. Unfortunately all Eastern voices are the same; the sweetest harmony to the Turkish ear consists in singing through the nose, and the Greeks are essentially Oriental in this particular; so that to the traveller who has enjoyed English singing it is very disagreeable.

Saints-days are kept with peculiar honour in this kingdom. Christmas week is spent in long repasts and diversions of every kind; christopsoma, a kind of Christmas-cake, is abundantly provided, with pastry of all kinds, and offered to every visitor until New Year's-day, when it is replaced by St. Basil's bread, a large

cake often measuring three feet in diameter, mixed with abundance of oil, and in which a small piece of money is placed. This is cut into pieces, lots are drawn, and he who wins the money is assured of happiness during the year. The carnival is often carried on for three weeks; during the last few days all the young people put on fancy dresses, disguising themselves as they best can and wearing masks. They then unite in large troops and pay their visits with or without music. They enter every house, disguising their voices as they sing, making the most burlesque grimaces and contortions, and trying pleasantly to deceive the inmates. When any one is recognised the whole unmask and retire with great gaiety, to recommence the fun elsewhere. On the 1st of May, the month of flowers, every one goes to the gardens, as they call the enclosures which all the owners of vineyards have in their property, and where they live during the gathering in of the grapes. Here they pluck the flowers, and return loaded with them to decorate the fronts of the houses. Those who do not possess a garden are on this day privileged to take from their neighbours'.

All the western side of the Peloponessus is rich in its soil: not a corner of land is lost; up to the mountains something is grown wherever it is possible to plant, and the climate favours the efforts of the agriculturist. Though fields of cotton, oats, and barley may be seen, the three great cultures are vines, olives, and currants, which latter form the principal export. Numbers of the inhabitants are proprietors of well-cultivated lands, their only occupation being to gather in their harvest. The richest have a warehouse on the seashore, where enormous quantities of this grape are carried in the

month of July. They have previously been spread on well-trodden ground or on mats specially made for this purpose, to dry in the sun for ten or twelve days. If unfortunately it should rain for a single hour during this time the harvest is lost; the grapes, already covered with sugar, become glued together, and form a sweet paste which is valueless. This is, however, a very uncommon occurrence, as the climate is so fine that thirty consecutive fair days may be counted upon.

Numbers of women come down at this season from the mountains, and are at once employed in shaking the currants in a sieve, to free them from the dust and small stones which are mixed among them. A more tedious part of the work consists in dividing the fruit into three qualities, the worst of which is not sold, but given to pigs, though excellent brandy might be made from it. During this time six or eight large English steamers are anchored in the port, giving animation to the town, and numerous *fêtes* take place among the proprietors of the currant vineyards and the officers. When once the produce is packed in cases it is carried to London, Eng-

land being the only country that treats directly with the owners. During the last few years improvements have been introduced in sifting the currants, and some hand-machines are used which abridge the women's work very considerably.

The plains and roads of Achaia are everywhere planted with olive-trees, and might make the fortune of the province. Their presses are, however, so imperfect that they only draw about half the oil from the berries, and the quality is the same. In many houses you may see the mistress pouring from the same vessel into the salad and the lamps. Some few more enlightened growers are introducing the French presses, by which double the quantity is obtained and of many degrees of excellence. They are also endeavouring to improve the wine, which is remarkably good when the resin is left out. With all the elements of prosperity which Greece possesses, there is no doubt that in time it will become a rich and largely exporting country. Want of capital joined to the indifference and idleness of the people are its greatest drawbacks.





MY SUMMER WREATH.

THE SILENT VOICE

When the heart is broken,
The soul is broken,
The body is broken,
The mind is broken,
The spirit is broken,
The whole is broken,
The whole is broken,
The whole is broken.

Give me a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole,
For I have a heart that is whole.

Give me a heart that is whole,
This is the heart that is whole,
And for the heart that is whole,
Let the heart that is whole,
Let the heart that is whole,
Let the heart that is whole,
Let the heart that is whole,
Let the heart that is whole.

MY SUMMER WREATH.

WREATHE not my brows with bay ;
There is no need of perfumed leaves and green
Where poet-lips have sung to night or day
Some hallowed hymn whose very echoes pray,
To tell the world what melody has been :
 Wreathe not my brows with bay.

Give me no crown of vine ;
For, lo, night's fever-pleasures shall not please,
Nor the red wine-god sign me with his sign,
Nor white-limbed Mænad press sweet lips to mine,
And lead me captive to her Thiades :
 Give me no crown of vine.

Weave me my wreath of rose ;
This is the crimson growth fair maidens choose,
And this the one sweet bloom the poet knows,
Love's flower, and though Love speed on wings of woes,
Shall never man refuse him when he woos :
 Weave me my wreath of rose.

DORIS.

A Tale of Old Blackheath.

CHAPTER I.

THERE are many people who can remember the old Green Man standing on the Greenwich edge of Blackheath, but very few know anything about the story which still clings to the spot, although the surroundings have so changed during the last quarter of a century.

Ten years back the old Green Man Inn still existed—a rambling tumble-down old hostelry, with funny little parlours looking out through big bow-windows, some on to the Dover road, some on to a patch of green grass fringed with a blaze of many-tinted flowers. Long before Greenwich and Blackheath had been brought within a twenty minutes' ride of Charing Cross by steam the Dover coaches used to pull up at the old inn, on the summit of the stiffish bit of hill leading on to Blackheath, in order that the teams might be changed, and that the passengers might stretch their legs and refresh themselves with real Kent ale. Nor did the prosperity of the inn depend solely upon its coach customers. Parties of citizens would come by water from London to Greenwich, rollick away the summer hours amongst the trees and glades of the Royal Park, and then, as the sun went down behind Shooter's Hill, hie them to the Green Man, there to partake of famous eggs and bacon—then of true rustic flavour—gulp huge 'dishes' of tea, play at bowls on the clean-cut lawn, or

sigh and ogle in the arbours dotted about the garden.

So the Green Man flourished even when coaches had had their day. But a levelling age came on apace, and a very garish ginpallace now marks the site of one of the quaintest bits of old life left in the London suburbs. Perhaps, looking around, the sweeping away of the old inn is not altogether to be regretted; for the irregularly carved and angled, quaintly-windowed, many-doored edifice would have looked strangely out of place amidst the clusters of stuccoed semi-detached villas now treading on each other's heels, as near as they can to the sacred precincts of the heath.

There were pretty maids in the old hostelries, and with the hostelries they seem to have disappeared, for in the modern dress-worshipping tip-hunting Mary Jane there is very little to interest, much less admire. At the time when the events about to be related took place—towards the end of the eighteenth century—Doris was the prettiest maid at the Green Man, and, for that, in the south of London; at least, so said those best of judges, commercial travellers and bagmen. She was a hale, plump, healthy Kentish lass, with lips as red as the cherries of her native county, laughing black eyes, brilliant teeth, and a wealth of the blackest hair ever held within ribbon. She was only a waiting-maid—not a maid-in-waiting, but a hard-working, scrubbing, polishing waiting-

maid—but her voice was so gentle, her hands so small and delicately formed, and her manner of speaking so different from that of the other coarse country wenches, that it was believed she had once been something far different. The landlord of the Green Man had found her one cruel winter's morn lying on a snow-heap by the side of the Dover road, wrapped in a shawl, out of sheer humanity had taken her in, and she had never for a day quitted the place of her adoption. Of course she had admirers amongst the sturdy young fellows about, and many more amongst the young London gallants who visited the inn; but though she showed her white teeth, blushed, and acted altogether in the most coquettish style possible as she listened to their compliments, she was not known to have a single lover, and it was not even recorded that any one had ever succeeded in wresting a kiss from her. She was the life and soul of the old inn. She sang as she dusted the great black banisters, as she 'made' the catafalques of beds, as she ran here and there, obeying orders from a dozen throats, and the regular bowl-players of the neighbourhood considered it an essential item in their evening's amusements that she should bring them their pipes and ale. For all this she was of course cordially hated by the other maids of the establishment, who would stoop to any device in order to bring her into a scrape; but she cared nothing for this, and lived till she was seventeen a very happy careless life as maid of the Green Man.

Every morning early, as she was dusting one of the great bow-windows looking on the Dover road, there passed a young man in the direction of Greenwich. He seemed to be very poor; for

in all weathers he wore the same clinging threadbare suit of black, and no glove or mitten ever protected the thin white hands, which clutched a big heavy bag slung over his shoulder. Nothing kept him away, and by degrees she used to watch for his passing as one of the events of the day, her heart yearning all the while to know who and what he was. Perhaps she pitied him as he painfully struggled by against wind, rain, snow, and tempest; perhaps there was something in his face which interested her—a pale clearly-cut featured face, with large eyes and thin white cheeks. At any rate, Doris knew to a moment when he would pass, and was up at the big window, with her pretty nose flattened against the panes, and her kind brilliant eyes watching his progress, every morning.

One wild winter's morning, as the wind swept over the great bleak heath, driving the rain as it were in a solid sheet before it, she spied him hobbling along round the corner with greater difficulty than usual; for the big bag seemed heavier and more unwieldy than ever. He had cleared the corner when the gale caught him, burst the great bag, and scattered its contents—papers of all sizes and shapes—far and wide. Active-limbed Doris was down in a moment, out into the storm, with her coquettishly-ribboned shoes splashing through the puddles and mud, helping the poor bewildered youth to gather together his scattered papers. This done, after much running and jumping about, laughter, and display of neatly-clocked stocking on her part, nothing would satisfy her but that he should come in to the bar and take a something hot to drink, whilst she patched up his old worn bag.

The vision of the pretty girl,

come like an angel to help him, was too much for the poor youth, and without a word he allowed her to lead him in. She gave him a bowl of hot steaming milk, and in a few seconds her active fingers were at work on the old bag.

'You are very, very kind to do all this for me,' said the young man, as soon as he had recovered his surprise and his voice. 'If you hadn't helped me to pick up these papers, I don't know what I should have done, I'm sure; for they are of great value.'

'Well,' replied laughing Doris, 'you would have done the same for me, I suppose, had I been out in the rain;' and as she looked at him she saw that the tears were in his eyes, and that he was really overcome by what she deemed a service of most ordinary civility.

'Yes,' replied he; 'but I am so unaccustomed to be kindly treated or spoken to; and you have done this voluntarily to a stranger whom you probably never saw before.'

'Never saw before!' cried Doris, bursting into a regular peal of laughter. 'Why, I see you pass here every morning in all weathers at the same hour; but of course you don't see me. I'm up-stairs; and you men, with important business, never look up at inn-maids.'

'No,' said the young man, 'I've never seen you before. I wish I had, and my daily walk would have had at least one little bit of sunshine in it.'

'Now tell me,' said Doris—'this is all I ask in return for the service, as you call it, that I have done you—what makes you go past here every morning in all weathers with that great big bag, as you do?'

'Well,' replied the young man, 'if it interests you at all, I tell you, I'm a lawyer.'

'A lawyer!' cried Doris; 'that's something dreadful, isn't it? I remember when I was, O, such a tiny mite of a child, I used to hear such a lot about lawyers, and I was taught to believe them to be such a dreadful set of men.'

'Well,' said the traveller, 'when I say I'm a lawyer, I mean to say that I'm in the office of a lawyer. I copy their letters and things—in fact, I'm a lawyer's clerk. Our place is in Greenwich, and my people are very particular, and insist on my being at the office every morning at eight o'clock; and you see I'm obliged to do it, because I was taken in as a favour; and—and—I shall really be late: so if you'll kindly give me my bag, I'll be off. I don't know how to thank you for what you have done. And—my name's Archer—Tom Archer. And, please, how much have I to pay you?'

'Pay!' said Doris, almost pettishly. 'O Mr. Archer, do you think I ask payment for doing an ordinary service? Here's your bag—quite waterproof, I think, now. And, Mr. Archer, when you pass here of a morning, you'll look up and say, "Good-morning, Doris;" then I shall know you are all right. Good-bye.'

Poor Tom tried to say good-bye, but he could only wring her plump white hand with his thin bony fingers, and hurried off, murmuring, 'Doris, Doris! What a pretty name, and what a good girl!'

Doris, after she had watched him out of sight, returned to her dusting, and thought, 'Well, I'm sure he's a good fellow, though he is so poor and sad.'

Poor Tom! His was truly a sunless life. He was an orphan, and had no one in the world to look to for advice and comfort but an old uncle, reputed of great wealth, who lived in a dingy old

house very near the spot where Blackheath Station now stands, and who just gave Tom lodging and board, and cared no further about his employment or prospects in life. Tom was, as he told Doris, copying clerk in a lawyer's office in Greenwich. His employers were hard grasping men, who looked upon clerks as machines to be used till worthless, and not as soul, flesh, and blood like themselves. In return for his long hard day of toil they gave him a miserable salary, at which many an office-boy in these days would turn up his nose, with which he managed to pay his uncle for his board and lodging and provide his own scanty wardrobe. And day after day he toiled from the grim house in Blackheath Vale, over the great wild heath, past the Green Man, down the hill to Greenwich. No wonder years had written on his young face the lines and wrinkles of an old man.

Just at this time work was much harder at the lawyer's office. A difficult case had been put into their hands, and there was endless copying of correspondence to be done concerning a certain estate in Kent, which was said to be in the wrong hands, although the real owner was known to be living. Proofs, however, were wanting to show that the actual possessor was not entitled to the property, as the title-deeds were in apparent order. So Tom had to work late at night; but as he passed the Green Man, with its cosily-lighted and curtained rooms, he thought of Doris, and the thoughts helped him to face the wind and rain which dashed over the dark heath. Every morning, too, he saw her pretty face at the bow-window, and heard her cheery laughing reply to his salute, and that helped him through the drudgery of the day.

Doris began to know Tom, as on fine evenings he would stop and chat to her at the inn-door, much to the disgust of the travellers and *habitués* assembled in the bar and parlour; and she found him, although the most artless and simple of creatures in the ways of the world, informed on a thousand matters about which she had no idea, and full of strange out-of-the-way knowledge, which to her appeared simply marvellous.

Time went on; Tom and Doris became more and more intimate, and at last were betrothed.

'Doris,' said Tom, 'I don't know what right I have to ask you to be my wife; for I have nothing in the world but what I earn, and that is barely sufficient to keep myself, much less to maintain you. Besides, you're not made for a quiet-going old-fashioned fellow like me. You like—'

'No, I don't,' interposed Doris, putting her red lips so near Tom's face that he was obliged to meet them with his. 'I don't like anything or anybody but you.'

'But you might pick up such a splendid husband amongst these gallants who are always praising your ankles and eyes,' urged Tom. 'They talk as I shall never be able to; and look at their money and fine dress.'

'Fine fiddlesticks, Tom!' said Doris. 'Do you think I care a straw for their ogings and fine speeches? Not I. I know their value and I know yours, and I put the two values side by side, and I think, Tom, I like you best.'

So Tom was made happy, and he didn't care for the daily walks to and from the office, or for the drudgery when he was there. But he could not help thinking that he was acting unfairly to Doris;

for he had no expectations in this world, and with what little knowledge he had of it he came to the conclusion that, notwithstanding their dreams of love in a cottage, it would be impossible for them to exist upon air.

CHAPTER II.

Tom's evening visits to Doris at the Green Man now became a regular part of his daily life, and the happiest part without doubt, especially when the weather was bad and there was every excuse for dallying longer than usual. As a rule he used to wait in the public parlour until she was disengaged, which was often some time, as the up Dover coach arrived just as he got to the Green Man, and the passengers, generally hungry and thirsty, often in a crusty mood, especially in bad weather, exacted the attendance of the whole available staff.

One very bitter night in January, Tom was blown into the Green Man doorway, and from thence into the parlour. He was later than usual, for a new phase had sprung up in the Kentish property case, and the copying work at the office was doubled; but late as he was, the up mail was later still, and there was some excitement as to the reasons of its non-arrival. Footpads and gentlemen of the high-road were then common on Blackheath, as on every wild open space near London; but the coaches were now so well armed, that it rarely was worth the while of highwaymen to make an attack. Besides, the scouts which had been sent out would have heard or seen something of an attack on the heath itself. So as the wisacres and horse-boys looked out into the black night, and saw the snowdrifts gradually

deepening, they put the delay down to weather. Of course Doris was there, but when she saw Tom she left the chattering groups, and running up to him gave him a sounding kiss.

'Well, Tom dear,' said she, perching herself on the edge of the table, carefully displaying a neat ankle and a natty red-ribboned shoe. 'Never mind the coach, they always turn up; how are you?'

'Well, Doris, thank God,' replied Tom, who had removed Doris from the table to his knees, 'but so tired. We've discovered—only of course you won't tell any one—that the real owner of the estate lives somewhere between here and Rochester; that she—it's a woman of course, Doris; women must be at the bottom of everything—is a Devonshire woman; that her name is Coombe—'

'Why,' interrupted Doris, 'I'm a Devonshire woman; but my name isn't Coombe, though, is it?'

'And,' continued Tom, speaking measuredly and beating time to every word on the round knuckles of Doris, 'that her parents have been long dead—'

'Mine have been long dead,' again put in Doris. 'Fancy, Tom, if you were to discover me to be an heiress!'

'And,' continued Tom again, 'that she is supposed to be living under a different name.'

'Well,' said Doris, 'if I claim the estate, will you back me up, Tom? Circumstances aren't very much against me, and funnier things have been known than the heiress to an estate turning up in an inn.'

'Of course, of course I will, my dear Doris,' stammered Tom; 'but I think it would be a little rash, wouldn't it, until we have got some more evidence?'

'Of course,' laughed Doris; 'you

don't think I'm in earnest, do you, you poor, dear, old, silly Tom ?

At this moment there was a hullabaloo outside, and the Dover mail dashed up, three-quarters of an hour behind time. Doris ran out to attend to the wants of the passengers, Tom was left alone in the parlour.

'There is many a true word spoken in jest,' thought he. 'The rightful possessor of the Rumley estates near Maidstone is a woman—that we know ; her name was Coombe—that we know ; she lives between Greenwich and Rochester—that we know ; her parents are dead—that we know ; she comes from Devonshire—that we know. Doris is a woman—that I know ; she comes from Devonshire, she lives here, and her parents are dead—all that I know. Was her name ever Coombe ? That I don't know ; but I'll think over it,' and Tom sought the big armchair near the window, away from the fire, for he dared not usurp the rights of mail passengers, and fell a-thinking.

In a few minutes the door was thrown open, and two men, evidently from their snow-covered cloaks and generally chilly appearance passengers by the mail, entered. One was a big, burly, swaggering fellow, with a fierce moustache and a loud voice, evidently a soldier ; the other a young fashionably-dressed gallant, with a good set of features, but a pair of evil-looking eyes that never were at rest, but seemed to be continually playing at hide-and-seek with one another round his nose. Tom did not much like the look of either ; but he sat still and thought in his corner, waiting till Doris should return, when he would wish her good-night and pursue his road home. They did not observe him, so he did not intrude himself upon them. The big man threw him-

self into a chair by the fire with a curse, and said,

'Well, since we are here we must make the best of it. It is an infernal nuisance to be stopped as we are ; but never mind, I've weathered a campaign or two in my life, and won't be put out for a woman. Sit down, and let's talk over matters.'

'Well,' replied the younger man, 'let's have something to drink. I'm so cussedly cold, that I don't know which are my fingers and which are my toes. Just ring, will you, Major ?'

The Major rang, and Doris appeared. As she entered, Tom noticed that both men started, and looked at her. She did not see Tom in the corner, and he felt uncommonly like a spy, but something rooted him to his chair.

'Make us a good hot drink, my dear,' said the Major ; 'we've travelled a long way, and Blackheath snow and wind are colder than anywhere else, I believe.'

She disappeared, and the two strangers began to talk in an undertone. Tom did not wish to listen, but he heard the name Doris so frequently mentioned that he rose. As he rose he stumbled against the table, and the strangers started up.

'You don't mean to say that you've been in here all this time?' hissed the burly Major. 'Have you overheard what we were saying ?'

'Not a word,' stammered Tom, in a regular tremble. 'I'm only a poor traveller, gentlemen. I didn't like to disturb you, so I didn't move ; but I'll go now, and you need not fear further interruption.'

He left the room, meeting Doris in the passage with a huge jug of steaming Kentish posset, gave her a kiss, and went out on his homeward road.

As he passed the Green Man

the next morning Doris was leaning out of the bow-window, and she said,

'Tom, I have something to show you, so don't be later than you can help to-night.'

Tom promised he would not, and wondered what Doris could have to show him: perhaps some little nicknack — her nimble fingers were always working him nicknacks. Then he thought of the law case, of the two gallants in the parlour, and their frequent mention of the name he loved best of all others, and in his simple mind had constructed a regular story, in which Doris figured as the long-hidden heiress, and he the poor suitor who afterwards tumbled into affluence and good fortune.

Doris met him at the door as he came home, and took him immediately into the parlour where he had been sitting the night before.

'Look here,' said she, holding out a crumpled piece of paper; 'after you had gone last night, the two travellers who came by the coach sat here till nearly two this morning. As I was dusting out the place just before you passed I found this on the ground.'

Tom took the paper, and read:

'Maidstone, Jan. 2, 1780.

'Dear Ned,—I hear that the law hounds are on the track of the heiress, and that we are suspected. We must make it our business to find her out, and if possible to get her away without noise and bother. I am going up to town by the mail on the 15th; so if you can leave Rumley in time, we might travel together.—Thine,

PENDERTON.'

'This is very important, Doris, and I must ask you to leave it with me. I rather think that it throws

a light on our case,' said Tom, after having read and reread the note three or four times. 'Tell me, have the two men gone?'

'Yes,' said Doris, 'but not to town. They left here about five o'clock on foot, going in the direction of Shooter's Hill. As they have not settled up their bill, and have left their travelling-bags behind, I presume they sleep here to-night.'

'Well, good-night, Doris,' said Tom; 'I'll go home and think over this.'

Poor Tom always gave everything the fullest consideration, probably because of his utter inability to grasp a matter at once. But in this case his wits seemed to have been unnaturally sharpened, and he was now fully persuaded that the solution of the Rumley estate problem lay with him, that the Doris of the parlour conversation was his Doris—for to him there was but one Doris in the world—and that she must be the heiress referred to in the note. Full of these happy sanguine dreams he shouldered his bag, and actually ran along the road leading to home.

It was still snowing, but he knew his road well, and although he had once tripped up and fallen into a disused gravel-pit, he only stopped fairly to take breath at Jack Cade's Mound. This is a mound with some half-dozen trees upon it, from which, the story runs, the famous popular agitator addressed his Kentish army in 1450.

Carpet-beaters monopolised the mound for the exercise of their craft until quite lately, when the Lewisham Board of Works stepped in, railed it in, and planted it with bushes; but it is still known as Jack Cade's Mound, and will be so known till the day when Blackheath is cut up for villa residences.

Tom stopped at the mound, threw his bag on the ground, and was about to peruse the letter again by the light of his small lantern, when he saw two figures approach him. His knees trembled, and his heart jumped into his mouth, for he was well versed in endless stories about the utter ruthlessness of Blackheath highwaymen; and although he had never met one before, inasmuch as his homeward path lay away from the main road, he was now fully convinced that his hour had come, and accordingly made preparations to surrender all he had.

'I've only this bag, gentlemen,' he whimpered, 'containing a few worthless papers, and to it you are welcome.'

'O, curse your bag!' said one of the figures; 'we don't want that. We are not footpads yet, are we, Ned?'

'Ned!' thought Tom; 'that's the name in the letter.' And as they came up he recognised his two companions of the parlour.

'Why, hang me, Penderton,' said the other, 'if it isn't our friend of the parlour!'

They whispered together for a few minutes, and then came up to Tom face to face.

'Now look here, my man,' said the burly one; 'you look as if a good job wouldn't make you miserable, but you mustn't ask any questions about it. If you'll do what we want this shall be yours;' and he shook a bag of coin in Tom's face.

'But—but,' stammered Tom, 'there isn't to be any shooting or killing or murder, is there?'

'Pshaw!' laughed the Major. 'Not a bit of it. All we want you to do is to have a carriage and four horses at this spot to-morrow night at nine o'clock. Your friends at the Green Man will let you have them. Mind, they must be

good horses, for we must be in Maidstone by to-morrow at noon.'

Delighted at getting off so cheaply, Tom promised. The two gentlemen disappeared in the snow, and he went on his road. 'I see it all,' said he to himself gleefully, as he plodded on. 'Fool as I am, my conjectures have been correct. Two men don't want a carriage and four horses at night for themselves. These men are mixed up in the Rumley estate case, and if my darling Doris is not the heiress referred to in the letter, my name's not Tom Archer.'

The next morning Tom was earlier than usual on his road to Greenwich, for he had not slept a wink all night, and was burning to arrange matters so as to trap the adventurers, as he concluded his friends of Jack Cade's Mound to be. Instead of bidding Doris good-morning simply, as was his wont, he beckoned to her to come down. She came to the door, looking prettier than he had ever seen her before, as the keen morning air tinged her cheeks with healthy red, and made her eyes sparkle with twofold brilliancy. Tom took her aside and told her his adventure of the previous evening. She was beside herself with joy, and promised to do all that Tom should direct her; so he said,

'Doris, if these men should find a pretext to-night for sending you out, go at once; let there be a carriage and four horses waiting at Jack Cade's Mound at nine o'clock. Don't tell any one of the affair, and be quite sure that no harm shall happen to you.'

Doris promised, they embraced, and Tom ran on his road to Greenwich. Arrived at the office, he acquainted his employers with all the circumstances of the case, and showed in support of his story the

letter found in the parlour. At first they pooh-poohed the idea that a poor simple drudge like Tom should be able to throw any light on a matter they had been attempting to sift for months; but he was so earnest in his entreaties that they should act upon his information that they consented to take four well-armed men, and go with him to the rendezvous. Accordingly at nine o'clock that night Tom, with his two masters and the four Bow-street runners, were at Jack Cade's Mound on wild Blackheath. It blew a regular tempest, and the snow drove through the air in sharp cutting blasts, forming huge drifts as it fell. Not a light was visible, and the whole surroundings of the spot were as bleak and desolate as possible. A distant clock tolled the hour of nine; the runners looked to their pistols, Tom with his employers stood behind the trees of the Mound, and all strained their eyes in the direction of the Green Man. A quarter of an hour elapsed, but yet not a sound. The runners cursed the cold, and the lawyers told Tom that he was playing them false. Tom himself was in an agony of doubts and fears. Suddenly in the dense blackness two lights flashed. Tom ran forward, and saw a carriage and four stumbling along the snow-buried road. He waved his lantern, and the postillions pulled up their horses; he knew them both; told them of the reason of his being at the Mound; then went back to his hiding-place, and waited for the next and final act. Nor had he to wait long, for in a very few minutes two horsemen came up, spurring their horses through the thick snow. Every one held his breath; one of the horsemen alighted, tied his horse to a tree on the Mound, spoke a word to the postillions, and went to his friend,

who remained on horseback. Tom watched every movement with the eyes of a tiger; he saw the second horseman erect on his steed, and he saw his love Doris seated behind him. The first horseman, in whom Tom recognised by his burly form the Major, lifted Doris off the horse, placed her in the carriage, and then with his friend jumped in. Scarcely had the door slammed when the ambush jumped out, Tom foremost. There was a flash, the report of a pistol and a sound of shattered glass. Tom fell heavily on the road. But the prey were captured; they were but two to six armed men, and although they cursed at the postillions for not driving ahead, yielded. Poor Doris shrieked as she saw Tom's inanimate form in the snow; but they lifted him into the carriage, and upon examination found that fright had done more to hurt him than anything else, for there was but a bullet graze on the left temple.

Back to the Green Man went the procession. They found that the whole establishment had turned out with blunderbusses, swords, and lanterns, on hearing the sounds of firing on the heath, and a hearty cheer greeted the party as it drew up. The two prisoners were first taken out, then Tom, then Doris. The prisoners were pale as death; Tom was conscious, but talking wildly; and Doris was crying like a child.

On the prisoners were found the whole of the papers relating to the Rumley estates, together with the forged leases and the will leaving the property to Doris Coombe when she should come of age. The proofs were overwhelming, and Tom became the hero of the hour. The partners now servilely turned round and congratulated him on his good fortune; but Doris bade them go about their

business, reminding them that their share in the discovery was very small. She then related how the two adventurers had asked her to point them out the nearest way to Shooter's Hill; how when they had got beyond the houses they had seized her, lifted her on horseback, and brought her to Cade's Mound. They had nothing to say, they admitted all. The 'Major,' who had dropped every bit of swagger, and who now appeared the most abject of creatures, told how Doris when a little girl had been hidden away at the death of her parents, forced to change her surname, and trained up to menial occupations, whilst he, a distant relation, obtained possession of the family papers,

and with his younger friend enjoyed the estate.

So ends the tale that hung round the old Green Man for many years. Doris Coombe of course married Tom Archer, and the family still hold the Rumley estates; the Major and his friend were hung at Maidstone for forgery and abduction before an immense concourse of people; and the landlord of the Green Man drove a roaring trade by letting out the carriage in which the plotters were captured at extra charge till it fell to pieces, and by showing the identical bag which Tom dropped, and which Doris patched up.

LONDON TREES.

From out the harsh and hardened stems
The tender green begins to peep,
And summer touches into gems
Those folded buds that fell asleep.
Whispering to every dreaming shoot
A vow of emerald coronets,
A veil of moss to hide the root
Found by the violets.

To every leafless lonely trunk
There comes a tender thrill and throb,
Expanding branches, slim or shrunk,
That the long winter went to rob
Of last year's bloom and russet hues,
Of this year's early hopes of green,
While the broad golden beams infuse
Strength to each queen.

Soft winds, that take such anxious care
Of forest queen or wood princess,
Tangle the gold laburnum's hair,
Or put back every heavy tress.
Remember how the city elm,
The ancient mulberry and plane,
Love little leaves to overwhelm
Memory of sleet and rain.

Enter the city, summer glow,
To warm and help with quick caress
Those trees that ached for long, when snow
Was all their outward shield and dress ;
And interlace, with loving skill,
A leafy covering above,
Through which we look up to the will
Of Him whose name is love.

Some far-off hint of breezy down,
Some subtle half-forgotten scent,
May penetrate the smoky town ;
By some sweet hillside pity lent,
Some page from far-off Nature's book,
Read in the fervent July sun,
Unfold within this city nook,
Whose life has just begun.

THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER XI.

A SIX-FOOTED ROBINSON AND HIS FRIDAY.

THE first half of the night passed over comfortably. Every now and then my leaf was so roughly shaken that I awoke. I did not at first quite know to what to attribute the shakings, but a little thought convinced me that they must have been the result of frogs striking against my raft as they

swam by. But for this everything was quiet about me. Once I had the curiosity to go and see what time it was. So I put my head out from under my impromptu coverlid. It was a beautiful night. Not a breath of air ruffled the surface of the water. The moon, half veiled by gossamer



clouds, shed a bluish light upon the surrounding landscape, of which only the general outlines and most striking features were recognisable. The bats were gone, and with them the danger I had so much dreaded in the evening. With a feeling of intense relief I compared my present security with the terrible crisis when my life had hung by a thread, and I could not sufficiently rejoice at the happy way in which things had turned out. Where were now my companions of the day before?

My position was a strange one. I was provisionally in safety, it is true. I had secured a comfortable residence, which might perhaps, with a little pains, be made even more convenient; chance had stocked my larder, for the mollusc would supply me with food for several days. But after that? I certainly might eat my raft, but apart from the fact that there would be a great sameness about it as a diet, it would not last for ever. The day would come when I should have to stop eating, unless I want-

ed another ducking. I mentally calculated how much of my floor I could sacrifice to my palate without compromising my safety, and the result was that I could subsist for a fortnight. A fortnight! The prospect quite reassured me, for what might not happen to alter the situation in that space of time?

I was reflecting thus when a cry of distress close by struck upon my ear. I looked in the direction from which it came. Something was stirring at the very edge of my raft. I ran to it, as a yet more despairing cry rang out, and there I saw a big ant clutching at my leaf, and vigorously resisting the attempts to drag it away made by some other creature, of which the head alone appeared above the surface of the water.

Yielding without a moment's hesitation to the generous impulses natural to me, I seized the ant by his forelegs, and putting out all my strength flung myself backwards, dragging both him and his enemy, who would not let go, on to the middle of the raft.

The ferocious creature, with whom I was thus disputing his prey, turned out to be the larva of a dytiscus. On finding himself thus suddenly out of his element he dropped the ant, and doubtless thinking I meant to attack him, he anticipated my onslaught by himself turning upon me. I should have been glad to make him understand that I meant him no harm, but it was useless at the moment to attempt to reason with him in his fury, and I had to defend myself. By stepping suddenly aside I prevented him from seizing me by the head, and the huge jaws he opened to their widest extent only closed on one of my forefeet. Fortunately for me these terrible mandibles were not sharp; pointed as they were they could only

pierce, not cut. Blow after blow from my enemy's flexible tail fell upon the lower portion of my body, whilst his pincers still clutched the leg they had seized. My solid armour rendered me invulnerable, as he soon found out; so he changed his tactics, and tried without loosening his hold to push me to the edge of the leaf, so as to make me fall into the water. Once in it I should have been at his mercy. I managed, however, to regain my footing, and as long as I could retain it I had no fear of being shoved off my raft. Unfortunately I am so constituted that I could not use my jaws as a weapon because my neck is so stiff. As long therefore as my assailant held me in his grasp my resistance was purely negative, and the struggle seemed likely to last a considerable time, when, just as I was beginning to despair of victory, an efficient ally came to my aid. At the beginning of the tussle the ant had looked on passively, watching doubtless for the right moment to strike in to my assistance. When she saw my efforts to free myself from my enemy frustrated she felt that the time for her interference had come, and with the courage and intelligence which distinguish her race she flung herself bravely upon the dytiscus, and opening her jaws seized him by the neck.

The neck of the dytiscus larva is very slender, and is only protected by a thin skin. This peculiarity, which enables its owner to turn his head with the greatest ease in every direction, has the corresponding disadvantage of leaving the neck exposed to attack: that is the one flaw in the armour of the dytiscus. The sturdy jaws of the ant met in the neck of the larva and nearly severed it in two. A shudder convulsed the limbs of the monster, and he immediately

let go of me to face this new and unexpected attack ; but the ant, without giving him time to rally, completed the work she had so successfully begun with two or three more bites. In a moment the head of the dytiscus was severed from its body, and my decapitated enemy, leaving behind him as a trophy the former important portion of his person, staggered back into his native element, where he probably quickly perished miserably.

This abrupt conclusion of the affray occurred in the very nick of time, for I was completely exhausted.

As I recovered my breath I looked at the ant, whom I had only glanced at when I dragged her from the water. She was of the large species which congregate in great number in the huge piles of twigs which you sometimes see in woods. Though I had never seen them close, for it is dangerous to approach them, I had, as it were, become quite familiar with these famous wood-ants' nest from hearing a bee, a friend of mine, talk of them. The ant before me was very strongly built, but what struck me most at first was that she had been mutilated. One antenna was missing, and its absence was quite a deformity, giving her a very peculiar appearance.

She returned my gaze without speaking, whilst with her forefeet she busied herself in washing her head and jaws, which were still stained with the blood of her enemy.

Between us the mandibles of the dytiscus were still quivering in the last convulsions.

The ant was the first to break the silence.

'You came to my assistance just in time, cricket ; but for you I should now be at the bottom of

the water between the pincers before us.'

'And but for your help,' I replied, 'the struggle in which I was engaged might have ended in a similar fate for me.'

'Very possibly ; but you would never have begun the struggle but for me, so that I am entirely your debtor. I am most anxious to impress upon you how grateful I am, and I hope we shall always be friends—friends till death. What say you ?'

This frank and ready cordiality delighted me, and I accepted the friendship so heartily offered to me without hesitation.

I knew very little about ants then. I had seen them often enough, of course, and I had constantly heard them talked about, for they are a powerful race, and play an important part in the world ; but I had never been thrown in contact with them, nor had I felt at all drawn towards them. All that I had heard of them had rather set me against them. Amongst us crickets they have the reputation of being a quarrelsome, wilful, touchy, and hot-tempered race. On the other hand, they are very intelligent, active, and industrious ; affectionate towards each other, and full of the most patriotic, or I should rather say parochial, spirit, what Frenchmen call Chauvinism. Every branch of the family—and there are many subdivisions—considers itself the first in importance, and this causes a good many civil wars amongst them. I have heard too that they are very far from hospitable, and give anything but a friendly reception to those who approach too near to their settlements. The large wood-ants, to which the one I had by chance come across belonged, are specially noted for this last-named peculiarity. The large towns they in-

habit are enveloped in great mystery; no one dares approach, far less enter, them, for fear of being murdered, and to the actual facts known about them rumour had added all manner of vague sur-

mises, propagated by the winged insects, who alone venture within their precincts. I had my doubts about their inhospitable character even then, and later I learnt that they harbour many guests amongst



them. I also saw cause to modify several other of my preconceived opinions, as will be seen further on.

For the time being, however, I was still under the influence of my prejudices. I could not, nevertheless, repulse the advances of the ant I had saved, especially

under the peculiar circumstances in which we were both situated. I therefore, as already stated, hastened to meet her half-way.

‘What accident,’ I inquired of her, ‘led to your being brought here?’

‘I was delayed at a considerable distance from my home by the

storm which, as you know, broke over yesterday afternoon. When it began to rain I was just entering a hollow path which leads from the broad road to the wood. Constant use had rendered me perfectly familiar with this path. As the rain increased in violence I began to run; but it soon became impossible to advance, and I took refuge under a stone till the shower should be over. I had

not chosen my shelter wisely, for I had not been there a quarter of an hour before a violent torrent overturned my stone and carried me to the pond. For a long time I swam about rather vaguely, for I was half submerged; but I finally climbed on to a water-lily, close to the leaf on which we are now. I intended resting on it for a while, and then quietly to think over the best means of getting



back to dry land. I lost consciousness until the night began to fall, and you can imagine my surprise when I wanted to look out to see the state of weather at finding that the flower had closed upon me, and held me its prisoner.

'I did not mind it so very much, though, knowing that it would be easy enough to get out when I chose; but finding myself in safety in my "box," I determined to pass the night in it, and soon fell asleep.

'When I awoke, imagining that

the sun had risen, I began to gnaw at the wall of my prison, and I very soon made a hole in it; but I was not the first to use the opening thus obtained. It was scarcely begun before water oozed in, filling the calyx of the flower and threatening to drown me if I did not make haste out, which of course I lost not a moment in doing. But my adventures were not yet over.

'For some reason, which I did not at first fathom, but subsequently supposed to have been

the alteration in the level of the pond, the flower in which I had taken refuge was no longer floating on the water, but had become halfsubmerged. By biting through its leaves I had been the instrument of my own ducking. I swam off, and soon reached this leaf; but just as I clutched at it to climb upon it, I was seized from behind, the lower part of my body being still in the water. Something was trying to drag me down. I clung to the leaf with all my strength, and instinctively cried for help. You know the rest.'

'It was lucky for you,' I observed, 'that I happened at that moment to have come out of my shelter to ascertain the time. But for that I should have arrived too late.'

'Just so. I was exhausted, and had your help been ever so little

delayed, I should have been lost. But how did you get here yourself?'

'Much as you did. I was in the same hollow path of which you spoke just now, and the torrent which brought you brought me also to the pond.'

'Now that our mutual curiosity is satisfied, you will, I hope, allow me to satisfy my appetite. I have eaten nothing for a long time, and I am dying of hunger.'

As she spoke the ant went up to the head of the larva she had killed, and set to work to gnaw through the horny outside skin, that she might regale herself on the soft contents of the inside. Leaving her to this agreeable operation, I returned to my leafy coverlet, and resumed my interrupted rest, intending to sleep on until dawn.

CHAPTER XII.

I ACCEPT AN INVITATION.

THE remainder of the night passed over without incident. When I got up again it was broad daylight. The ant, perched on the highest part of the folded leaf, was busy at her toilette; that is to say, she was diligently rubbing her head and every part of her body between her mandibles. I followed her example after wishing her good-morning.

This duty performed, I approached my companion to consult with her on a question of the greatest urgency—namely, how we were to regain the shore.

'That,' she said, 'is the very least of my anxieties. We shall get back to land when the wind rises. Meanwhile let us talk.'

'You know how to get to land?'

'Of course I do.'

'How?'

'O, make your mind easy, and

leave that to me. We shall get to land when we like.'

Her confidence reassured me, and trusting to her ingenuity I said no more on the subject.

We talked of this thing and that; of her home, her fellow-citizens, and her daily occupations. I learnt that she came from the wood on the height, visible from our pond, and that she lived in a colony containing several thousand inhabitants. Moreover, she told me that this colony was not the only one in the neighbourhood, but that there was another of a similar kind and almost equally populous at a little distance off.

'Although the inhabitants of the other colony are of the same species as ourselves,' said the ant, 'we don't think much of them; they are bad neighbours.'

I thought to myself that the

neighbours in question probably said the same of the speaker's colony.

'There are colonies of other ants,' she continued, 'living not far from us, of yellow, black, brown ants, &c. But they are common people, with whom we don't care to associate.'

I told her in my turn, in a few words and without entering into details, what had brought me into these parts.

'Truth to tell,' she observed, 'I was surprised to meet you. You live in families, do you not? But I have never seen or heard of crickets hereabouts.'

'You see before you,' I answered, laughing, 'a regular vagabond, without hearth or home—nothing more or less than an adventurer.'

'What are you going to do when you leave this pond?'

'O,' I said, 'I have a kind of temporary home up there and a few chance acquaintances; but Heaven only knows whether, after yesterday's catastrophe, I shall find either still in existence.'

'It is doubtful certainly; but in any case if you are at a loss I shall be glad if you will come to us.'

At this proposal, which was quite unexpected, I started and stared at the speaker in astonishment. She noticed the expression of my face, and said,

'You seem surprised.'

'Naturally I am.'

'Why so?'

'I have been told, and I have always believed, that strangers were forbidden to enter the colonies of ants under pain of death.'

'It is true,' she replied. 'If you ventured into our neighbourhood alone, you would run a great risk of being cut to pieces; but escorted by me you will be in no danger. We harbour a great many guests.'

'You think your people will receive me?'

'Of course; why not?'

'I have not hesitated to tell you that you have the reputation of being anything but hospitable.'

'Generally speaking we are not. We don't give a very friendly reception to strangers. But you must not suppose that this inhospitality is the result of any blind or systematic prejudice against outsiders. We object to prying, importunate, lazy, and useless intruders, that is all.'

'I am afraid I shall be included in the last class.'

'We will settle that—in any case introduced by me—'

'O, I shall be quite ready to go under your protection. You tell me you have other guests.'

'Yes, a great many. Amongst our numerous servants we have some prisoners who have to work for us and others who amuse us. Now I think of it I'll introduce you as a musician.'

'Agreed!' I cried, laughing. 'I am ready for the adventure.'

We went on talking about different things for some time, the ant proving herself very well informed and of a bright happy disposition. Once, however, she seemed rather ill at ease, and I inquired the reason.

'There are dragon-flies about,' she said, 'and they are a class of ruffians not to be trifled with. Don't you think that I am a little too conspicuous on this leaf?'

'I will defend you if need arise.'

'Thanks. Still I think I'll just make an opening for myself in the middle of this fold which will give me a certain refuge in case of danger.'

I was quite of her opinion as to the advisability of this step. There were plenty of holes at the edge of the fold; but they were

none of them so readily accessible as the one the ant proposed making in the middle. We soon made an opening close to where we stood.

'There,' she said; 'I have now nothing to fear. At the slightest alarm I disappear.'

'You seem to stand greatly in awe of dragon-flies.'

'And well I may. If I fell into the clutches of one of them he would make but a single mouthful of me.'

'There are a good many down there near the banks of the pond.'

'Yes; and of every species.'

We watched their graceful and rapid movements for some little time. Presently the ant said to me,

'The wind is rising. Don't you think we had better get back to land?'

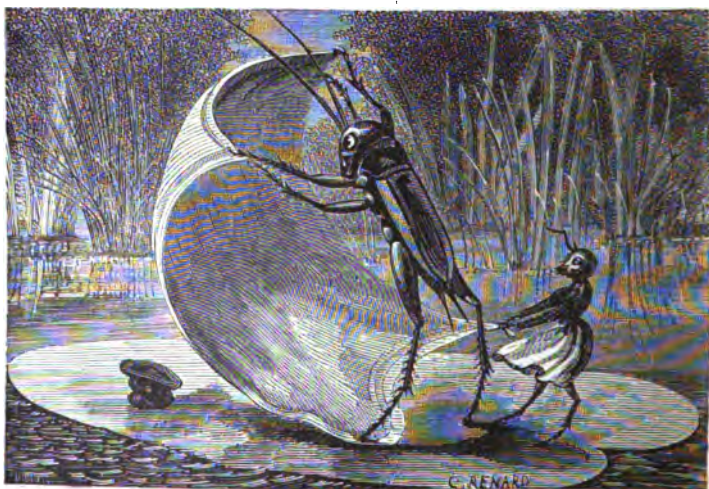
'Certainly I do; we can't remain here indefinitely. But I see no means of transport.'

'You need not look about you. We shall go on this leaf.'

'But it is attached to a plant.'

'Well, we will detach it.'

'Bravo!' I cried. 'Why did



not such a simple plan occur to me?

'Come, set to work. You are better provided with tools than I am. Cut, hew, and let us leave our moorings.'

Without further detail I attacked the stalk where it joined the leaf.

'Don't do it that way,' said the ant. 'Cut away the leaf beyond where it springs from the stem; you will find that much easier.'

I followed her advice, and we were soon quit of the moorings, which kept us at anchor in the centre of the water, and floating

along in the direction of the wind.

Our voyage was accomplished without any remarkable incident. Two or three times we ran into patches of pond-weed or knot-grass, but we easily made our way through the pliant leaves of these plants. The water had again become clear. Passing over a tuft of water-milfoil, I called the ant's attention to the elegance and delicacy of this aquatic plant. Crowds of insects of every variety were disporting themselves amongst its branches. I should much have liked to pause and

examine more at my ease a sight so new to me, but it was impossible. The wind drove us on, and we were rapidly approaching the shore.

The ant seemed thoughtful, and

looked attentively at the point where to all appearance we should make the land. I asked her what was the matter.

'We are all right as long as we are in deep water,' she said; 'but



the part of the pond to which the wind is driving us is bordered with bulrushes, and we shall inevitably come to a standstill at some distance from the land. If these bulrushes do not extend far, we can cut some of their stalks, so that they will fall in the direction of the bank, and use the

prostrate stems as a bridge; but if they do extend far, we must find some other means of getting to land. I think that is what we shall have to do; for yesterday's storm has swelled the waters of the pond, and the banks, which slope gently down on this side, are partially submerged.'

My companion's remarks appeared to me well founded; but she had not allowed for an obstacle of another kind which we encountered before we reached the bed of bulrushes.

The surface of the water, though free from all encumbrances in the centre, became as we advanced more and more closely covered with floating bodies of every variety. The rain of the previous day had swept into the pond an immense number of odds and ends, such as sticks, stubble, leaves, grains, &c., and with them were mingled many dead bodies of insects. All these objects, drifted along by the wind, had accumulated near the bank, for which we were ourselves making. They soon formed a compact layer, which arrested our progress, and our vessel came to a standstill at a little distance from the bulrushes.

'What shall we do?' I exclaimed.

'If I were alone,' answered the ant, 'I could easily cross the obstruction; but you are heavier than I am, and if you ventured upon them you would certainly fall through.'

'I expect I should. But,' I added, 'you have friends who are looking out for you, who are perhaps uneasy at your long absence. For me, however, there is no hurry, and I will wait on this raft till the water falls. I shall escape in the end.'

'No, no,' she replied; 'I am not going to desert you in that style. We'll find some means of crossing together, or we will both remain here. I have promised to bring you safely to land, and I never break my word. Excuse me one moment: I am just going as far as the bulrushes to make a *reconnaissance*.'

As she spoke she ran to the

edge of the raft, and from it sprang on to the floating sticks near it.

'Mind the dragon-flies!' I shouted after her.

'Make yourself easy,' she replied; 'I'll take care of myself.'

I watched her as she made her way across, carefully selecting the firmest-looking objects to step upon. More than once I lost sight of her, and feared that she had fallen through some unnoticed crevice; but she reappeared immediately, and in a few minutes I saw her arrive safe and sound at the foot of a tall bulrush, which stood alone a little in advance of the rest. She set to work to climb, and I trembled lest she should be perceived by some dragon-fly, but fortunately there were none in sight just then.

Once at the top she paused, and looked about her long and earnestly. She made me some signs of which I could not understand the meaning, and then came down as she had gone up. When she was again on the level of the water she disappeared behind the bulrush.

I waited, expecting her to return and tell me the result of her observations, but it was some minutes before she reappeared. What could have become of her? I wondered. I was sure that she had not been carried off by a dragon-fly, or any other creature of prey, for, as I was not far from the bulrush, I must have witnessed the tragedy. Could she have caught sight of some enemy, and have kept still with a view to eluding its notice?

I was reflecting thus when I noticed that the bulrush, from which I had not removed my eyes, was shaking slightly; then it bent towards me, and finally fell forwards. I had only just time to spring aside out of its way;

for it struck the lily-leaf where I had been standing, and the brown spikelets forming its head lashed up the water behind me, drenching me with spray.

I now, as I thought, fully understood the ant's intentions. By gnawing through the stem of the plant with her sharp jaws on the side furthest from me, she had made it fall with a view to throwing a bridge between my raft and the place which she had reached. The only difficulty had been to make the bulrush fall in the right direction, and the result proved that she had taken the proper steps.

She was already running rapidly towards me on her extempore bridge, crying triumphantly,

'Well, what do you think of my skill? Did I calculate rightly?'

'Perfectly,' I replied, 'and I will try and avail myself of the road you have made. It will be rather difficult, for I am not much of a rope-dancer.'

'You are all wrong, friend,' she interrupted. 'I have no intention of letting you run such a risk as that; the bridge isn't wide enough for you, and besides it leads nowhere. I didn't mean it for a bridge at all, but as a kind of oar to help us to cross all this floating rubbish without leaving our raft. We must begin by launching the folded part of the leaf on the water. There, that is done; now come this side, and take the stem of the bulrush between your forefeet. Splendid! Now push against the lily-leaf with your hind feet with all your strength. It is moving. Go on. Stand firm! Courage—we are getting on first-rate.'

So we were—we were moving.

I obeyed all the ant's instructions as she gave them. Firmly grasping the bulrush between my forefeet, I gave an impetus to the

lily-leaf with my hinder limbs, thus compelling it to slide under me, and so breaking the resistance of the floating rubbish. Every now and then I left off propelling the raft to move a little forwards, and thus without over-exertion I got our bark safely as far as the root of the broken bulrush.

Arrived there, I inquired of the ant what was to be done next.

'Well, there's one great difficulty conquered,' she observed, 'but we are not out of the wood yet. We are nearly past the floating sticks, for you see the bulrushes have stopped their further progress, and the water in front of us is quite clear; but I am puzzled to know what to do next.'

I looked in the direction of the bulrushes, close to which we now were, and noticed that as the ant had said there was no rubbish between them. Their tall smooth stems rose, at some little distance from each other, from clear and transparent water, and as they only formed a narrow belt the shore we wished to gain was distinctly visible beyond them. For all that, however, the little forest between us and that shore formed an impassable barrier to our raft. We should undoubtedly have to abandon it for some other means of transport.

'The water will soon fall,' observed the ant; 'but I think the pond is too deep here for us to be left high and dry even then. Bulrushes always grow with their roots in water. It's no use waiting for what won't help us a bit when it happens. Let's think of something else.'

'We could, it is true,' she went on, 'cut another bulrush and make it fall towards the bank, but it would not be long enough quite to reach it, and when one got to the end, even supposing—which is

doubtful—that you could cross such a narrow bridge, we should still have water before us.’

‘O, we could swim then,’ I observed. ‘We should only have a little distance to go.’

‘You think so, do you, cricket? Don’t fancy anything so ridiculous. The little distance, as you call it, will be the most dangerous part of our journey. Don’t you know that the banks of ponds are peopled—not to speak of frogs and water-beetles—with the larvæ of stone-flies, willow-flies, and dragon-flies, all equally ferocious? Have you ever seen the larvæ of dragon-flies?’

‘No, never.’

‘Well, then, beware of making their acquaintance.’

‘Are they, then, so very cruel?’

‘You had a tussle with a dytiscus larva last night, didn’t you?’

‘I did indeed, and won no easy victory.’

‘Well, the larvæ of dragon-flies are much more formidable.’

‘Are they really? And do they live in the water too?’

‘O, we shall see plenty before we land, you may make sure of that. Only let us take care not to fall into their clutches.’

‘All right. But what’s to be done next?’



(To be continued.)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER VIII. THE MOUNTAINS OF URI.

'When warm from myrtle bays and tranquil seas
Comes on, to whisper hope, the vernal breeze;
When hums the mountain-bee in May's glad ear,
And emerald isles to spot the heights appear;
When shouts and lowing herds the valley fill,
And louder torrents stun the noontide hill,—
The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to scale,
To silence leaving the deserted vale.'

WORDSWORTH.



A GIRL FROM THE SCHÄCHENTHAL.

THE valleys of the forest canton of Uri are still in a state of Nature, and in the highest degree wild, savage, and sterile. The landscape is composed of rocks, glaciers, forests, and waterfalls jumbled together in wild confusion, and looking as if Nature had omitted to give them the necessary finishing touches. There are materials in plenty, but the workmen have decamped; and therefore, instead of the rich green meadows, well-regulated rivers, velvety slopes and pastures, and charming natural parks which we see in other valleys of Switzerland, we have a wilderness covered with great blocks of stone, tossed hither and thither in wildest disorder, and streams and torrents running riot according to their own sweet wills.

But it is this very disorderliness which constitutes the charm of the heights and valleys of Uri; for those who wish to watch the pulsations of the great heart of Nature, and to penetrate the secrets of her realm, must be content to wander through a region devoid of paths; and those who care to study Nature's book will here find many a fair page to engage their attention.

Those who come only in the summer can form no idea of what the winter is in these mountains, nor of the immense strength which Spring must bring to bear before she can win and keep the victory over the mighty power of death. What is a winter in the plains compared with a winter in the mountains? For six long months the snow does not melt, and one thick white covering is laid over another until all the features of the landscape, even the most rugged and strongly marked, are rounded and softened. All the clefts and cracks and hollows of the mountains and glaciers are entirely filled; the snow is lying deep on

the mountain-pastures—so deep, indeed, as to have completely buried the brown chalets, roofs and all; and the strongest trees in the forest are sighing and groaning beneath the heavy load of flakes, which bends and breaks not only their tops, but their stoutest branches. Whichever way one looks there is not a living creature to be seen; all are sleeping somewhere deep underground, among the roots of the trees, in dens or caves or holes, or at the bottom of the lake. A few crows and ravens flit timidly and hungrily over the dreary waste, uttering a melancholy cry as they go. The eagle, and occasionally the golden vulture, may be seen in the neighbourhood of human dwellings; but the chamois and ptarmigan are hiding, either under the dark shelter of the old *Wetterfichte* or among the brushwood in the pine-forests, where the soft low chirp of the redbreast and wren may be heard, and they are sheltered from the cold by a regular roof of snow.

The waterfall, which in the summer-time dashed down into the valley with a thundering roar, now hangs motionless from the cliff, numb, stiff, and dead. There is deep silence all around, and Nature seems to be waiting for deliverance with timid misgiving.

But the sun gains in power, and the peaks of the highest mountains are beginning to glisten with the first thaw. The spirits of the air are engaged in fierce and incessant conflicts by night and by day, driving away the snow-clouds, and bringing rain and fog in their stead. A gentle breeze is wafted hither across the St. Gotthard, and, soon increasing to a gale, is recognised and welcomed as the Föhn, known throughout Switzerland as the herald of spring. Upborne by mighty pinions, it comes across the mountains and swoops down

upon the valleys, where the snow melts away before its scorching breath, and the frozen waters are stirred to their very depths.

Warm May showers begin to fall, and the sun gains more and more victories every day; while at night a thick gray fog comes down to guard the work which spring has accomplished during the day, and to keep off the frost-spirits, who else would descend from the heights and destroy it all. The trees shake the snow out of their dark tresses, the first buds burst forth upon the beech, the first tassels appear on the hazel-bush and willow, and the fresh young grass begins to shoot up by the side of the springs and streams. Then Spring herself comes down the valley of the Reusa, with a wreath of primroses round her head, and there is a general awakening. Everything begins to put forth buds and blossoms, and earth and air are alike filled with the cheerful sounds and brilliant tints of returning life. There is a sound of dropping and trickling and bubbling and running, as the snow-fields thaw more and more; streams leap noisily over the rocks; and river and lake having burst their bonds are tossing their wild waves hither and thither in a state of grand commotion. Up in the mountains the glaciers are splitting and cracking with a noise like the roar of artillery, and great shining masses of ice fall with a crash into the valley, and are followed by the avalanches carrying everything before them in their mad career. Then back comes the Föhn again to complete the work he has begun. What a howling there is in the ravines and gorges, mingled with deep undertones, like the full notes of an organ! The waters swell and rage as if

possessed by demons, lakes overflow their banks, and everything in the valley is in a state of lively agitation. And at night, when all else is still, how the Föhn raves and roars! But through all the wild uproar one seems to hear Nature saying, 'Spring is coming, Spring is coming!' And behold! she comes, she is here! There she stands, breathing and palpitating; and all the living things in the valley and on the mountains atune their thousand voices to a rapturous greeting. There is the bold cry of the jay and the auspicious call of the woodpecker; the finch darts up from the budding twig, and the cuckoo, magpie, thrush, partridge (*Perdix saxatilis*), and cock-of-the-woods (*Tetrao urogallus*), all join in the grand chorus to the best of their power. Butterflies, and all the swarm of tiny winged creatures which rejoice in light and sunshine, are hovering in a state of rapturous delight over the flowers which have just unfolded their brilliant blossoms—over the coltsfoot, ranunculuses, primroses, cowslips, orchises, saxifrages, and blue-bells, which grow by the side of the streams, on the mountain-pastures, and on the edge of the woods. Cows and goats too, which have grown weary of their long imprisonment in the stable, are lowing and bleating forth their greeting to the bright new world; herd-bells are once more heard tinkling again; and man too opens his mouth, and welcomes the spring with a loud and hearty 'huzza!'

The Föhn wind is completely master in the little canton of Uri, and regulates the laws which govern the climate; which, however, is nowhere more capricious than it is here. The St. Gotthard Pass is the one by which the Föhn chiefly travels; but he reigns



VALLEY OF ERSTFELD.

all the year round in the regions of the upper air, and often descends into the valleys, where, indeed, his power is chiefly displayed. He is a son of the Italian sirocco, and is sent hither from the desert of the south. Before he comes, thick gray mists are seen brooding over the southern horizon, and they grow denser and denser until they take the form of clouds, and creep up to the tops of the mountains. Then the sun turns pale and sickly, and when he sets he lights up the western heavens with a sort of dull lurid glow. At night the air is oppressive and so still that not a leaf seems to be stirring; there is a large halo round the moon, the stars flicker and twinkle, and numerous meteors are to be seen. When morning comes there is no dew lying on the fields, and the air is so extremely clear and transparent that the most distant mountains, which usually look like blue clouds on the horizon, seem suddenly to have come nearer. Animals are fully sensible of the state of the atmosphere; they low and bellow restlessly, they cannot sleep, and seem to await the approaching tempest with much nervous excitement. Human beings too feel excited, and can hardly close their eyes for restlessness and anxiety. Plants hang down their heads and their leaves as if faint and languid; and at night, if you listen, you will hear a roaring among the trees far up the mountain, as if the Wild Huntsman were rushing madly through the hot air. The brooks in the valley are brawling louder than ever, for they are filled to overflowing with the water which the wind has melted from the glaciers. But this state of things does not last much longer. There are two or three prodigious flaps from the

mighty wings, and then there is a sudden strange calm; but it is the calm which precedes the storm. At last it bursts forth and rushes through the valleys with all the destructive demoniacal force of a hurricane, bringing terror wherever it goes. It breaks down the trees, loosens the avalanches, tears the roofs off the houses, and, as it has completely dried all the wood-work, it fans the tiniest spark into a flame. For this reason firemen patrol the streets at all hours, and go into the farmhouses and cottages, and insist on having all the fires extinguished.

And yet the Föhn is truly a blessing to the land; for, if he carry a sword in one hand, he certainly bears a horn of plenty in the other, and pours out its contents with a liberal hand upon the whole neighbourhood of Altdorf, Bürglen, and Attinghausen, where numbers of southern plants live and flourish, and those which are indigenous to the soil thrive with southern luxuriance. The Alpine pastures, too, share the blessing which he brings, so that the herdsmen of Uri are able to go to the mountains sooner than those of any other canton.

The canton of Uri is, however, poor; even the present generation are obliged to do battle with the wild and savage powers of Nature. They do not attempt to do any more than their ancestors did before them, and the constant struggle, together with other unfavourable circumstances, has made the people, who are otherwise a fine race, somewhat dull and unenterprising. All who could have given themselves up to such easy pursuits as are connected with the traffic of the great St. Gotthard road, contentedly taking what they can get from the annual army of visitors, and adopting from them sundry bad habits



ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL, AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MADERANERTHAL.

without learning much good. Thus many of the old native branches of industry have been neglected, the people have been spoilt, and whenever their easy gains have failed they have had nothing to fall back upon but

alms and begging; for the thrift which is so characteristic of the Swiss everywhere else is utterly unknown here.

The few grand houses which may be seen here and there are just *polvere negli occhi*, as the

Italians say, dust thrown in the eyes—a deception, in fact; for they belong to a few rich and therefore powerful families, and behind them is concealed a sad neglect of all that makes life pleasant. Who thinks of sowing corn in Uri, even where it might be grown with advantage? Has any one yet thought of planting young trees in the room of those which have been cut down? And is it not merely the dread of the avalanches which prevents people from cutting down even the *Bannwälder*, or 'Sacred Forests'? The population of Uri is very small, and they prefer crowding together in the villages, instead of turning their attention to agriculture and other pursuits, which would be far more profitable in the end.

There is an old chronicler, however, who sings the praise of Uri, and he says: 'The people of Uri, especially those of Altdorf, the principal place in the canton, are so civil and well-behaved as to be more like townspeople than country-folk. They are respectful, kind, polite, good-tempered, and, what is more important than all, they are religious people, and very zealous in their adhesion to the true and ancient Catholic faith.'

The best opportunity for really studying the population, clan by clan, is on the first Sunday in May, when they meet to hold the General Assembly of the canton, and you will be astonished to see how much of vigour and vitality there still is in the primitive institutions of antiquity. Yonder fine-looking men have come down from Urnerboden, Schächen, Spiringen, Seelisberg, and Sisikon; and these sturdy weather-beaten folk are from the Maderanenthal, Urserenthal, Andermatt, and Wasen. As formerly they

obeyed the call of the 'Horn of Uri,' so now they gather round the banner which displays as its device the well-known bull's head; they attend service in the church of Altdorf, and then proceed to the ancient meeting-place of the diet of the canton, which is situated in the meadow of Bötzingen, between Attinghausen and Bürglen, and below Schaddorf. There could not be a grander or more splendid stage for such a May-day spectacle: the background is closed in by steep, dark, pine-clad heights; below rises the rocky wall of the Windgälle; and opposite, on the other side of the Reuss, tower the lofty heads of the Schlossberg, Krönlet, Spanort, Uri-Rothstock, and others, which, at this season of the year, are still covered with snow quite low down, and are perpetually sending avalanches crashing down into the valleys with a thundering roar.

It is impossible to look at the ruins of the venerable Castle of Attinghausen without feeling for the moment sobered. There they stand, covered by the friendly ivy, at the top of a gently rising turf-clad eminence, and at their feet lie the cottages of the peasants, their roofs half concealed by richly-laden fruit-trees. This is the village where lived Walter Fürst, one of the noble-hearted founders of the Confederacy. Tell used to come over hither from Bürglen to woo Fürst's daughter; and the castle was the ancestral seat of the noble lords of Attinghausen, who governed the canton of Uri for more than a century, and were held in great honour. The ruins seem, as we look at them, to echo the well-known words of the poet:

'The old order changeth, yielding place to new.'

Bürglen, on the height opposite,



CASTLE OF ATTINGHAUSEN.

stands at the entrance to the Schächenthal like a sentinel, and a more attractive one it would be impossible to find. The whole surrounding landscape — the roaring stream known as the Schächen; the great dark nut-trees growing over the

houses, which are scattered here and there as far as the edge of the forest; the black tower standing by the side of the path which leads up to the village; the village itself, small and cosy, with a sublime and extensive view of mountain



GORGE OF THE SCHÄCHEN,

and valley ; the people, the children in the road, the herd-bells—everything, in fact, seems to correspond exactly with the picture our youthful fancy drew of the home and birthplace of the Swiss hero. Might not yonder tall fine-looking man, standing by the noisy sawmill with the axe in his hand, be William Tell himself? And the boy there? One expects every moment to see him run up to his father, crying, in the words of Walter Tell :

‘ Father, my bow-string’s broken; mend it for me!’

Leaving Bürglen, however, we shall be glad to follow the men who have been attending the Assembly back to their dark-blue valleys. Those who belong to Urnerboden and Ennetmarch have to traverse the whole length of the Schächen valley, on their way back to their beautiful mountain-pastures. The Schächen, which rushes and roars at our side the whole way, must find its short life hard enough. It rises in the Scheerhorn and Clariden Alps in the midst of a wild desolate region, and at once begins its struggle with the rocks and ravine. Its strength increases as it goes on, for fresh life flows into it on both sides from a hundred little springs and rivulets, but the joyousness of its course, which begins where the valley ends, is soon cut short. Its course from its mountain-cradle to Bürglen lies through forests of gloomy fir-trees, broken here and there by bare naked rocks; there are huge blocks of stone lying in the bed of the valley, which the water either flows round or leaps over; ragged-looking clouds of mist hover round the peaks and crags; and here and there are mountain-pastures, such as the Sittlisalp, Lämmerbachalp, and Alp Trogen. Quite at the end of the valley lies the

pasture known as the Brunnialpeli, and, as we look across it, we see the gloomy head of the Great Ruchen towering aloft. But the most beautiful feature in the whole landscape is the Staubi, a wonderful cascade, whose abundant supply of water is derived from the eternal snow of the Scheerhorn and the underlying Gries glacier. From this point you may ascend to Urnerboden, which is the Arcadia of the canton of Uri, where nothing is to be heard but the lowing and bleating of cows and sheep, the tinkle of their bells, the call of the herdsmen, or the sound of the little bell belonging to the chapel in the wood, and nothing is to be seen but broad green pastures interspersed with trees, milch-cows, milkers, châlets, and dairy utensils. From Urnerboden we may either descend into the canton of Glarus, from which the hamlet is said to have been craftily purloined, or we may go back as far as the cascade of Staubi, thence proceed to the Hüfi glacier, and so make our way into the vale of Maderan; but we must be prepared for a rough scramble through a desolate region covered with broken rocks and ice, for this is a pass seldom frequented by any but huntsmen and herdsmen. Those who prefer a more comfortable way of doing things will take the road from Altdorf up the valley of the Reuss. On reaching Erstfeld, you see the Joch glacier and Spannörter on the right, and before you opens out the extremely romantic valley of Erstfeld, which lies half buried amid the wild *débris* of the Schlossberg, Spannörter, and Krönlet. To the north it is shut in by the Geisberg, to the south by the Jacober. It is as wild and primitive as the valley of Schächen, and indeed as the valleys of Uri in general, and in the fall of the



CHURCHYARD OF SILENEN.

Faulenbach it can boast a sight almost as beautiful as that presented by the Staubi. It also possesses the solemn mysterious-looking Lake of Faulensee—a pearl set in the silver of the surrounding glaciers which descend from the Schlossberg and Krönlet.

The beautiful road which leads from Erstfeld or Klus to Silenen, past the mouth of the Maderanertal and farther still, is the St. Gotthard road; and the broad valley through which it passes is that of the Reuss. In point of fact it really begins at Amsteg, and if you look up the valley from Klus, it seems to be entirely shut in by the dark, gigantic, ice-crowned mass of the Bristenstock which lies across it. The view does not alter until we reach the picturesque hamlet of Silenen, where the walnut-trees appear in full beauty, and the ruins of a tower, situated on a low hill by the roadside, remind us once more of William Tell and his times. This unpretending-looking tower is said to be the remains of the Castle of Zwing-Uri, built by Hermann Gessler von Bruneck, the Austrian governor of Schwyz and Uri, who thought by this means to overawe the people and bring them entirely under his own control. But man's work dwindles to nothing by the side of Nature's; and what were the most defiant-looking castle in the world if brought face to face with the Bristenstock? Schiller may well say:

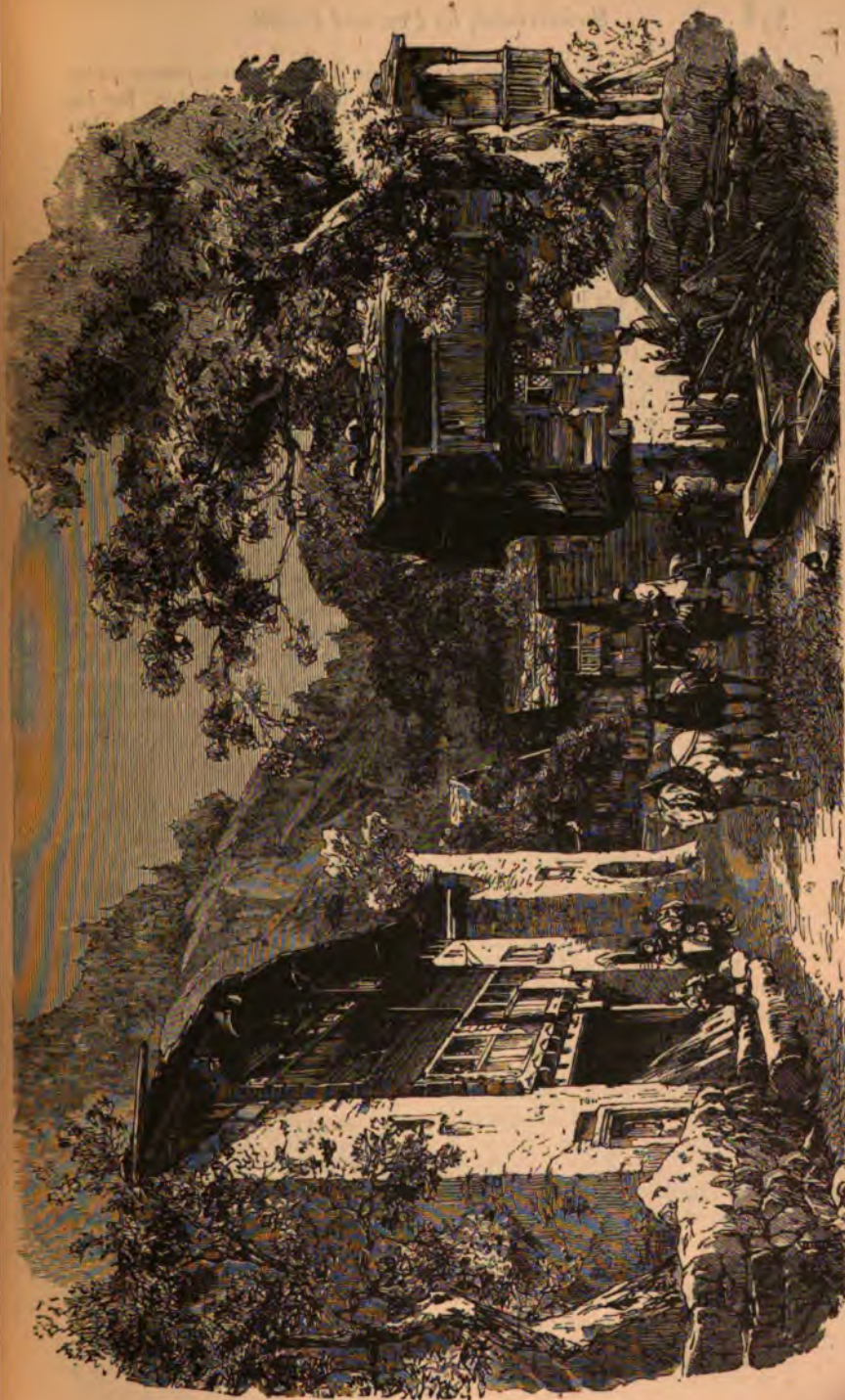
'Let's see how many mole-hills such as
 ^{this}
 'Twould take to raise a pile as large as
 ^{one}
 Of these, the least of Uri's mountains.'

However, the real origin of the ruin is involved in obscurity. The old chronicles, which are our best sources of information, tell us that Zwing-Uri stood much nearer to Altdorf, and they also say that the

people utterly demolished it in their fury, without leaving so much as one stone upon another.

We next come to Amsteg, or more properly An den Stegen ('at the foot-bridges'), which derives its name from the fact of there being two bridges here—one over the Reuss, a grand structure of stone, which has superseded the former little wooden bridge, and the other over the Kerstelenbach, a noisy torrent which rushes wildly down to join the river. Amsteg lies at the foot of the Bristenstock, and the little hamlet lying buried among orchards just a step higher up is also called Bristen, while a little farther on still we come to Inschi and Ried. From this point the St. Gotthard road begins its toilsome ascent through the wildest scenery. At Inschi the cliffs approach close to the side of the road, and the Reuss rushes along the deep bed it has worn for itself at the bottom of a dark ravine; while, as we look back, we see an extensive mountain-landscape, in which the Scheerhorn, Windgälle, Ruchen, and Hüfistock are especially conspicuous.

But there is no excursion better worth making than that into the grand and wildly beautiful valley of Maderan, which here opens before us, and even at its entrance gives promise of great beauty. It received its name from an Italian named Maderana, who set up furnaces in the valley for the purpose of smelting the iron ore which he procured from the foot of the Windgälle. The people, however, still mostly call it Kerstelenthal, after the brook of the same name—which, by the way, has about as much right to be called a 'brook' as young Siegfried the anvil-breaker had to be called a 'boy.' The Kerstelen Brook, so called, receives its wild torrent of water some few miles



A STREET IN SILENEN.

from here from the wondrously beautiful glacier of Hüfi, which lies between the Scheerhorn, Clariden, and Tödi.

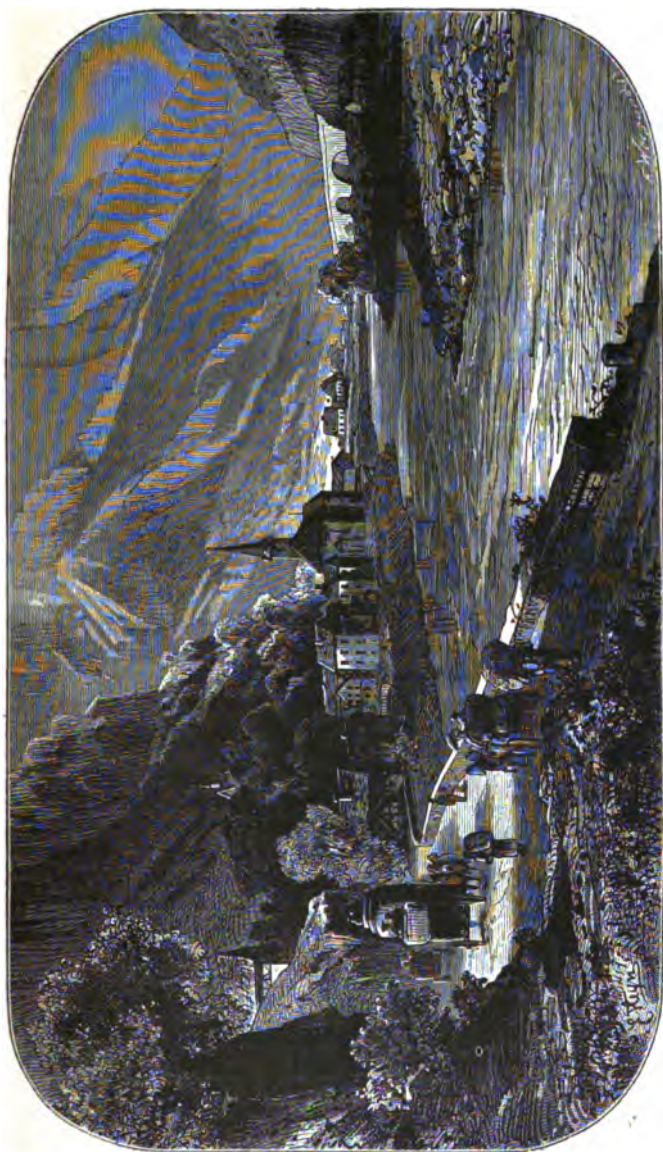
The valley is still utterly primitive, and probably has a great future before it as a favourite resort of tourists, though at present the luckless traveller runs great risk of breaking his legs and neck before he succeeds in making his way through the gloomy pines and over stocks and stones and thistles and briars to the very comfortable inn of the 'Swiss Alpine Club,' which stands half hidden by trees on the Balm Cliff. It is a very oasis in the desert, and is an agreeable sojourn, both as regards its external and internal attractions. There is much to be seen without, both close at hand and at a distance; there is plenty of climbing to be done; and the great mountains are so near at hand that one can not only see them, but actually feel their icy breath. Great domes of ice rear themselves close above the forest, and among the many waterfalls which dash from the cliffs we may especially mention the Stäuber, which flutters down the face of the terraced Düssistock, and the Seidenbach opposite it. Lovelier glacier-maidens than these never wove their long tresses in lonely solitude. There is no end to the various beauties of the Maderan valley; but what perhaps chiefly excites the admiration of the visitor is the Hüfi glacier, which may bear comparison with many of its far-famed brethren among the Bernese Alps. Solemn and gruesome enough it looks, amid the loneliness of the ice-bound mountains which surround it; but, while it conveys to the mind a profound idea of the im-

mense dynamic force possessed by ice, it is also remarkable for its great purity and grand perfection of development. Those who wish to obtain a full view of it must descend the desolate slope of the Hüfiälpeli, and then they will also be able to see the mountains which have pushed it down into the valley.

Nature still reigns with undiminished power over these regions, and it would be difficult to wage a successful war with her; for water, ice, snow, and storm are absolute masters of the situation. What furious games of snow-balling the old giants indulge in with their avalanches is evident enough from the way in which the poor trees on the slope of the mountain have suffered, and from the rubbish which fills the bottom of the valley and the watercourse. The animal world, too, enjoys possession of almost all its ancient rights, and the chamois and eagle find themselves safer here than anywhere else. The eagle is still king of the air, and his cry is to be heard high above the glacier valley, while the shrill whistle of the marmot echoes from the rocks below. Here, too, we come across the ancient primeval-looking tree known as the Schirmtanne or Wetterfichte, the umbrella-fir, which is a sort of outpost of the mountain-forest, and is not to be seen in perfection except by those who ascend these Alpine heights.

These strong sturdy firs strike their roots into the deepest clefts of the rock, and cling so tenaciously to their anchorage that they are able to withstand the wildest assaults of the tempest, while their companions either remain far below or have long since succumbed to wind and storm.

(To be continued.)



ANSTEG.

FOLLY OR FAME ?

3 Question.

O LOVE, sweet folly, shall I choose thy joys ?
To lie beneath the shade of leaves, sunlit
And softly trembling in the summer breeze,
Where falls the snow-white blossom, and the air,
Rich with the fragrance kissed from sleeping flowers,
Hums ever with the dreamy monotone
Of insect-life. Shall I lie thus, and, steeped
Deep in the sweetness of idlesse and love,
Gaze up forgetful, fondly, wooingly,
Into the depths of some fair woman's eyes,
And lose for ever all ambition there ?
Shall I thus idly drift along the stream
In aimless fruitless indolence, and hear
No music save the murmur of fair lips
And that most sweet of all sweet melodies,
The soft low utt'rance of a woman's love ?
Shall I do this ? or on the arduous road
To fame plod wearily, scorning all love
And every softer pleasure, labouring on
Up to fulfilment of ambition's dream ?
Shall I thus toil, all passionless and cold,
Away from that which gives to weary life
Its sweetest truest recompense, until
I win the world's loud plaudits, till I grasp
The fame long sought for—that may never come,
Or but too late—in death—ambition's goal ?
Shall I do this, or choose the gentler dream ?
Which ? Which is better ? Fruit or fruitless flower ?
One woman's love or all the world's esteem ?

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BOOKS OF THE SEASON.

IN making a selection of the books of the season, we will first deal with the novels. Fiction has become in our day an absolute necessity for the sweetness and vitality of society. There is no want of good signs in the fiction of the present day. We think we note a decreasing number of really bad or indifferent novels. Our publishers evidence a growing sense of the real importance of a very high class of literature of this kind, and make their selections with obvious anxiety to place the highest available talent before their readers. For the modern novel is the pleasant form under which subjects of the most serious interest are discussed, in which much of the best poetry and painting of the day is to be found, and which exhibits the subjects which happen to be uppermost in the public mind. It is our cheerful duty on the present occasion to gather a *florilegium* of the best recent fiction. We admit none save what we can recommend to our readers as being really good—good for the reading-club, the library, and the drawing-room table. We find that all the favourite novelists in the high tide of prosperity are extending and consolidating their success—our acknowledged leaders of fiction, and minor stars which have the promise of by and by becoming stars of the first magnitude.

First of all comes our faithful Trollope, who guarantees us a perpetual supply of pure domestic English fiction. Mr. Trollope has several times attempted to escape beyond the barriers of the story-

teller. He holds profound political views; he can translate an ancient classic for English readers; he can give us travels, essays, and articles. But the British public insists that Mr. Trollope shall write stories for them, and will only tolerate his other writings in proportion as they approximate to stories. Accordingly Mr. Trollope weaves story upon story out of his fertile brain.* He knows that the love-story is after all the most popular kind of story, and the fecundity with which he contrives to construct plots, incidents, and dialogue in love-affairs is positively appalling. Mr. Trollope must have been absolutely irresistible in his day. He seems to possess in his arsenal every weapon which can touch the female heart. There is in all his writings a light touch and an artistic finish. There is a grace and cleverness in all he writes, a faithful photographing of the scenes through which he moves, and—that for which he has hardly received the credit he deserves—a pre-Raphaelite accuracy of description of the scenery where he lays his story. We should as soon think of arguing with the master of three hundred legions as criticising the love-bits. But as Homer sometimes nods, so Mr. Trollope is now and then inconsistent in his statements. We believe that the great difficulty of story-tellers is not to contradict themselves. On one occasion Mr. Trollope certainly contradicts himself. He makes the Bishop's chaplain remark to his wife, after he has received a wiggling from

* *Is he Popenjoy?* A novel. By Anthony Trollope. (Chapman & Hall.)

his lordship, that the Bishop is breaking up. Later in the story, in his usual zeal to delineate a clerical Don Juan, the chaplain is forced to marry a tradesman's daughter, to whom he had written compromising letters. Here Mr. Trollope has obviously lost the thread of his own story, first making his chaplain a Benedict, and then a bachelor.

Another story, full of vigour and ability, is Mr. McCarthy's *Miss Misanthrope*.^{*} We mention him next to Mr. Trollope because he seems to come next to and to be most like Mr. Trollope, and many of his admirers would doubtless say that he does not suffer by the comparison. He is not like Mr. Trollope in any sense of imitateness, but, so to speak, he goes to the same places and mixes in the same sort of society. Some of the individuals in the story stand out very distinctly, and will long impress themselves on the reader's mind. Blanchet, with his poetry, his 'unappreciated' set of friends, his absurdity and affectation; the Duke's younger brother, who has metamorphosed himself into an American rowdy; Money, the M.P., who takes his scientific inventions to Russia, because he can get no encouragement from our own Government, — are characters fresh, lifelike, and original. We cannot say that we like his young ladies as well as we like his young men. Minola, the heroine, is a somewhat lofty young woman, who is probably superior to any of Mr. Trollope's bevy of beauties; but, for all that, we prefer the Lucy of Mr. Trollope to the Lucy of Mr. McCarthy, and so too with other Christian names. He is a very careful writer, and in future stories will doubtless work up effectively his

female portraiture. Those who go much into literary clubs, and are familiar with some of the latest schools of poetry, will greatly enjoy the author's satiric hits at the melodious nonsense of the present day. Here is a specimen of Mr. Blanchet's poetry, which is neither better nor worse than a good deal of the 'fleshly' and other schools. It is really very fine, barring the total unintelligibility.

'Upon my darkness may there well befall
Light of all darkness, darkness of all
light;
Starfire of amber, dew of deathlike
sheen;
Waters that burn, pale fires that sicken
all,
And shadows all aglow with saffron
light:
But comes my lady, who is Glory's
queen,
And all the bright is dark, and pallid
dark the bright.'

As a parody, this is as good as anything in *Firmilian* or in the *Rejected Addresses*.

We may perhaps be permitted to say, with the frankness which can alone render criticism of any value, that Mr. Black has hardly made *Green Pastures and Piccadilly* of the same merit as most of his stories. Every volume which Mr. Black publishes exhibits abundant indications of poetry and power, and the first volume of his present work^{*} ought to be rated very highly. He is best on English ground, and when he gets away to America the interest flags. Hugh Balfour is an extraordinary member of Parliament, and part of his career is borrowed from incidents which have really taken place in the lives of young senators. He disguises himself, and goes to live in 'a haunt of thieves, tramps, and hawkers; a very pretty den, indeed—the property of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and almost under the

^{*} *Miss Misanthrope*. By Justin McCarthy. (Chatto & Windus.)

^{*} *Green Pastures and Piccadilly*. By William Black. (Macmillan.)

shadow of Westminster Abbey.' (We observe that Mr. Gilbert, in his ingenious little book *Them Boots*, speaks of the large amount of public-house property held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.) Then again our young M.P. takes up the City Companies with a view to their disestablishment and disendowment. This is really a great political question, which, though slumbering for the present, will one day break out into furious life. He says: 'I should go to the gentlemen who form the court of the great City guilds, and I would say to them, "Gentlemen, I assure you, you would be far better in health and morals if you would cease to spend your revenues on banquets at five guineas a head. You have had quite as much of that as is good for you. Now I propose to take over the whole of the property at present in your hands; and if I find any reasonable bequest in favour of fishmongers or skimmers, or any other poor tradesmen, that I will administer: but the rest of your wealth—it is only a trifle of twenty millions or so capitalised—I mean to use for the benefit of yourselves and your fellow-citizens."' Then again he has a deserved laugh against persons who are 'demonstrating their respectability by building churches like mad.' It now happens sometimes—Mosheim points it out as one of the worst signs of one age of the Church—that people quite void of religion will build churches through superstition or vulgar ostentation.

By Celia's Arbour,* by Messrs. Besant and Rice—who rival Erckmann - Chatrian and Beaumont and Fletcher—and Holme Lee's *Straightforward*,† present some

curious points of contact and contrast. In each case the hero is an unknown adopted child. In each case the mystery receives a commonplace explanation in the parentage of poor gentlefolk. The heroes are of a very similar moral quality—clever, bright, straightforward fellows, made very happy by useful work and prosperous love. In each novel, too, there is a good deal of serious effort, an earnest purpose, and a moral or even a religious tone. Under the gaiety and sparkle of Messrs. Besant and Rice we have a great deal of careful work and deliberate attention; and we believe Holme Lee is aiming very carefully at social reform and sanitary improvement.

In this remarkable Besant-Rice series of stories we do not profess to identify which may be the work of Mr. Besant and which of Mr. Rice; but it is easy to see that of the two authors one does the graver part and one the lighter part—that one excels in the sparkling and animated dialogue, and the other in subtle disquisition and analysis. The united efforts produce a very remarkable combination, which has given us some of the best fiction of recent years; and we may hope for similar healthy products. Their works have a certain intellectual stimulus. They cannot fail, by a certain richness of phrase and allusion, to set many readers thinking and studying. What we may call the modern spirit is especially observable in them. The writers place us *en rapport* with the spirit and tendencies of our day; they revive just the feelings and topics of the hour. It is this characteristic of the modern novel which gives it an historical value. The Macaulay of the future, when he comes to write his chapter on the internal condition of the country,

* *By Celia's Arbour*. By Messrs. Besant and Rice. (Sampson Low & Co.)

† *Straightforward*. By Holme Lee. (Smith, Elder, & Co.)

will find that the novel is at least as important as the Blue-book. Much the same may be said for Holme Lee. In *Straightforward* we especially recognise the fidelity and brightness of the description of Swiss and Italian scenery, of English provincial society, and of medical life. People who have large landed property might well study the way in which our *Straightforward* hero acquitted himself of his duties.

With the same sincerity of purpose we have Mrs. Spender's *Both in the Wrong*.* The story opens excellently well at Chamouni, with a vivid description of Alpine scenery and an Alpine catastrophe. But the work is inartistic, with little plot; and the plot, such as it is, has slender development. As soon as we have become rather fond of little Magdalen, we have a second heroine in the second volume, and we are in great doubt whether one or both of the young couples are 'in the wrong.' There is a great charm in Mrs. Spender's present story, which appears to exhibit a distinct advance upon her previous works. She has a careful, observant, sympathetic eye for Nature and society; her sketches are made with singular fidelity, and the tone is throughout bracing and healthy. It requires a good deal of literary skill to work the contrast between the London season and the secluded village life. There are several modern points especially discussed in the way of woman's rights and wrongs, nursing in hospitals, &c. There is a very fine story of a strong-minded lady of advanced Liberal views, who, when her Conservative husband contests a parliamentary borough, drives into the town in yellow favours, and throws her influence into the opposite scale.

* *Both in the Wrong*. By Mrs. Edward Spender. (Hurst & Blackett.)

Mrs. Lynn Linton has earned her laurels as a novel-writer, with an abundant literary capacity for what some people think higher literary work than the novel. We believe she wrote a famous article called the 'Girl of the Period,' and since then she has sketched our periodic maidens at considerable detail. Mrs. Linton is almost too intellectual for a novelist; by which we mean that we often turn away from admiring the heroine to admiring Mrs. Linton herself—the keenness of her analysis, the finish of the style, the subtlety of the plot. The work* is remarkable for its social sketches and sensational *dénouement*.

In the literature of travel we think we can hardly err in conceding a very conspicuous place to Major Campion's work, *On the Frontier*.† Mr. Campion knew George Catlin in his youth; he early drank in stories of peril and adventure. He was born hunter, trapper, pioneer. After many years the dormant instincts revived, and Mr. Campion set out on a wild career in the Far West which Mr. Catlin would have regarded with keen appreciation. His descriptions of his camp by the Republican River on the Grande Prairie, and his experiences, first with buffaloes and then with Indians, are enough to fire the imagination, and to urge many a youngster to start for an expedition in the Far West. Major Campion has a modest, straightforward, De Foe style of writing, which irresistibly allures the reader, and we found ourselves positively unable to put down his book until we finished it. The vicissitudes of a hunter's life are so great that we can well

* *The World well lost*. By E. Lynn Linton. 2 vols. (Chatto & Windus)

† *On the Frontier: Reminiscences of Wild Sports, Personal Adventures, and Strange Scenes*. By J. S. Campion. (Chapman & Hall.)

understand that the author sees a great deal in civilisation to recommend it. He suffered terribly at the hands of the Indians, who destroyed all the property he had amassed; but he seems to possess wonderful powers of recuperation. There might be buffalo, prairie bear, and venison one day; but another day he would be wet, cold, hungry, and forlorn, and have to 'tighten the waist-belt to the last hole.' Bears, wolves, pumas, lynxes, at times proffered their companionship, but the wild Indians proved worse than all the wild animals. On one occasion he was nearly starved; on another he was snowed up. On one or two occasions he was nearly shot; on one or two more nearly eaten.

There is a great deal of interesting and instructive information to be derived from the work: about salt grasses and a soda lake; about plants and animals; about silver mines and speculations; about forests and cañons. He has romantic stories about Peruvian beauty, and wild stories about fights and flights. We suddenly find a curious comic touch about London society. At Leavenworth City he met a set of aristocratic young fellows who had come out to shoot. Wishing to befriend them he proffered to put them in the way of things, and help them in their plans. The greenhorns had actually brought four servants in livery out to the frontier, and they superciliously declined the help of the best hunter, 'from snipe to Indians,' whom chance had thrown in their way: 'O, we never take advice from an entire stranger. We have letters to the first banker here. We shall rely entirely on him in the matter. He will have our full confidence. Ah, good-morning; ah!' It was a case of Lord Dundreary on his travels.

Amid the voluminous literature

of African travel some such work as Keith Johnston's *Africa** becomes almost a necessity. It is one of a series based on Hellwald's *Die Erde und Ihre Völker*, but possesses a fulness with which Hellwald's section on the subject cannot compete. Messrs. Stanford have also published a magnificent map of Africa, the finest in existence, which is an appropriate accompaniment to the present work. The Atlas and the companion volume bring down our knowledge of Africa to the last word. The present volume presents us with the cream of all the literature of Africa in a systematised and coherent form. As a book of reference it is invaluable, and truly of an encyclopædic character. There are many books which describe various portions of Africa; but there is none in existence which similarly brings before us the diorama of the whole continent. It brings us down from the time of the earliest navigators and discoverers to the present days of Cameron and Stanley. The great number of new books about Africa attest the interest which is now taken in the 'dark' or 'lost' continent, and for all objects of utility we must place the present work at the head of the list.

Mrs. Brassey's *Voyage of the Sunbeam*† is in every way a *livre du luxe*. The lady is not a good sailor, although her husband is the best amateur navigator in the country; but she is eminently courageous, and intrusted herself and her children to his steam-yacht for a twelvemonth's voyage. Her work does not possess the originality or fulness of the books which we have named above; but

* *Africa*. Edited and extended by Keith Johnston; with Ethnological Appendix by A. H. Keane, B.A. (Stanford.)

† *Voyage of the Sunbeam*. By Mrs. Brassey. (Longmans.)

it is almost the next best thing to going round the world ourselves, reading how 'the Brasseys' did it with every modern appliance of luxury and convenience. In fact we are reminded of Jules Verne's Captain Nemo and his wonderful ship. They literally 'surveyed the world from China to Peru.' Perhaps since Rogers published his *Pleasures of Memory* there has been hardly any work so lavishly and expensively illustrated. The book is brimful of information, presented with skilful literary ability, and it shows us how great advantages may be employed with the utmost good sense and with the best results.

Another adventurous writer—to be bracketed with Major Campion—is Captain Parker Gillmore, well known in sporting literature as 'Ubique,' who has given us a book of South African travel, more especially the Kalahari Desert, which he calls *The Great Thirst Land*.* His book shows various points of resemblance to that of Major Campion, especially in his extreme sufferings through want of water, which nearly killed him. The intending tourist or emigrant ought carefully to compare this volume with what Mr. Froude, Mr. Trollope, and other writers have been lately saying. The Transvaal has every prospect of being a successful stock-breeding country; but at any time one of these frightful droughts might prove the ruin of a farmer. Captain Gillmore's expedition was admirably planned and equipped; but it encountered great difficulties, and at times nearly broke down. No sportsman can hunt large game in this part of Africa

without obtaining special permission from the barbaric kings. This is sometimes withheld, and not unreasonably, as the Boers ruthlessly slaughter big game in countless multitudes, even when no use can be made of their flesh. Captain Gillmore resolutely set himself against such inhumanity and thoughtless extravagance. He had no ambition to make wonderful bags of game. He excited the disgust of his followers by refusing to shoot anything more than he really wanted. He gives incidentally very striking proofs of the truth of Gordon Cumming's narrative. The Kaffirs come out fairly well from his description; he finds that the natives like and trust the English as much as they dislike the Dutch Boers. He has, of course, a good many stories about lions. In this part of the country they breed as plentifully as rabbits, and are almost as harmless. He has a good deal to tell us, too, about mission work. His testimony is incidental and unbiassed, and is strongly in favour of the missionaries. Captain Gillmore does not think it such a very difficult thing to pass through Africa: 'I would say that, with moderate expenditure and half a dozen attendants, I will pass through Africa from north to south, and probably not take more than a year to do it.'

We have had two works respecting the war in Armenia; one by Mr. Williams, and another by Mr. Norman of the *Times*.* The Asiatic part of the recent war is so much less studied and understood than the European, that we are glad to have the materials for accurate information and a safe judgment. English interests are more affected on the Asiatic side

* *The Great Thirst Land: a Ride through Natal, Orange Free State, Transvaal, and Kalahari Desert.* (Cassell, Petter, & Galpin.)

* *Armenia and the Campaign of 1877.* By C. B. Norman. (Cassell, Petter, & Galpin.)

than on the European. On a point which is very much discussed at the present time Mr. Norman's language is clear and emphatic. He has no doubt that a battalion of native troops would prove more than a match for any battalion the Czar could bring against them. He holds that the Indian irregular cavalry would be far more than a match for any cavalry of the army of the Caucasus. Mr. Norman appears to us to be anxious to be impartial. He went out a Turcophile, but he candidly avows he ceased to be one. He gives evidence to that systematic cruelty and mismanagement of the Mussulmans which make it unfit that they should be the rulers of territory with an alien and Christian population. He shows clearly that for many previous years the Russians, mainly by means of spies, had laid plans for the capture of Erzeroum. He has a good deal of military criticism on the operations of Mucktar Pasha, and also of the Russian commanders, and freely acquits the latter of the atrocities alleged against them.

Mr. Hare is famous for taking his walks abroad. After reading about his *Walks* in Italy and Spain we waited in full expectation of the inevitable *Walks in London*.* The two volumes are very fairly done, albeit with a few manifest errors. Now crowds of people are coming up to town, many of the visitants can hardly do better than carefully read Mr. Hare's volumes, and then set to work systematically to verify his observations. Indeed, people who have lived in London all their lives will find that Mr. Hare presents them with a whole body of interesting facts, of which they had only scanty or shadowy ideas.

* *Walks in London*. By Augustus J. C. Hare. (Daldy, Isbister, & Co.)

To many parts of town, more especially the British Museum, he has in fact given us an excellent guide-book. The volumes fall into the natural division of the City and the West-end; and there is much interesting archæology in the first part, and a good deal of pleasant social gossip in the last. The art-treasures of such houses as Mr. Holford's in Park-lane (Dorchester House) are excellently described, and the cream of the whole literature which deals with the *ana* of the London streets is here presented to us. It must not be supposed that Mr. Hare's London walks are an after-thought suggested by his previous works. From a boy, when he used to read Knight's *London* and dedicate his stray coins and stray half-hours to it, he used to delight in wandering about town. He thinks London the most interestingly picturesque city in the world. He has something to say even for the fogs: 'If the fogs are not too thick an artist will find an additional charm in them; and will remember with pleasure the beautiful effects upon the river, when only the grand features remain and the ignominious details are blotted out, or when the eternal mist around St. Paul's is turned into a glittering haze.' One effect of the work upon the reader is that he determines to visit some of the out-of-the-way places enumerated—Jamrach's collection of wild animals in the Ratcliff Highway, Williams's Library, the Soane Museum, Bourdon House behind Ratcliff Highway, the rooms of the Society of Arts, and various other places. While using freely the labours of others, Mr. Hare has made independent contributions of his own.

One of the most charming volumes of biography which we have read for a long time is Mrs. John

O'Connell's memoir of her father,* Mr. Bianconi, the inventor of the famous Irish Bian car. It is a faithful, racy, and amusing life. Most modern biographies have a certain unnatural sickliness about them, since they only deal with the good points of their subjects, avoiding anything open to censure, and carefully eliminating whatever is characteristic and picturesque. It is not in this way that the authoress understands her duty either as a biographer or as a daughter. She paints her father strongly but truly, with much that is grotesque and even unamiable in his character; but at the same time with an honesty, energy, and power that made him a great public benefactor, and also enabled him to accumulate large sums and buy a dozen landed estates. She admits that the revered author of her existence was something of a 'dodger.' The instinct of the car-driver was strong upon him to the last; he would take up a traveller into his private carriage and charge him the usual fare. The biography is eminently lively and readable.

It is perhaps somewhat annoying to Miss Zimmern that in publishing her work on Lessing† the wind has, to some extent, been taken out of her sails by Mr. Sime's able and exhaustive book, which we recently noticed. But the disadvantage to the authoress is the distinct gain to the public. It is a fortunate thing for the memory of Lessing that he should have found two such English students to write his life. The English reader who wishes to understand Lessing should study both these biographies, and he will find that they mutually

help and supplement each other. While Mr. Sime's work has the greater critical value and is the more exhaustive work, Miss Zimmern's account of Lessing's home and married life is better done and extremely interesting. We think, however, that both biographers have failed to make adequate use of Lessing's correspondence with the lady whom he married. Miss Zimmern, without going in detail through Lessing's various works, gives a clear outline of those more important ones by which he is now chiefly known to English readers. It is noticeable that several fresh translations from Lessing's writings have been published since the appearance of these biographies, so that he really promises to be among the very best known of German writers. And it is most desirable that this should be the case. Lessing is a great force in the art, the criticism, the philosophy, the theology of Germany. It is well that such a man should be thoroughly understood, and Miss Zimmern's book helps us to understand him in very important aspects.

Mr. L'Estrange's *History of Humour** hardly aims higher than to meet the wants of the circulating library. Many of the criticisms are obvious, many of the quotations hackneyed. Still there is a great deal of instruction conveyed in his mirthful pages. It is a great thing that the history of an important province of English literature should be well known. Mr. L'Estrange, who has gained an honourable niche in contemporary literature, administers globules of criticism and literature in pleasant doses of many of the most charming passages in the writings of our English humorists.

* *Memoir of Bianconi*. By Mrs. John Morgan O'Connell. (Smith & Elder.)

† *Life of Lessing*. By Helen Zimmern. (Longmans.)

* *History of English Humour*. By Rev. A. G. L'Estrange. (Hurst & Blackett.)

Mr. Page's life of Thoreau* is a book deserving of careful study. With Thoreau's social and political ideas we are not concerned; they have been much misunderstood, and he has suffered great injustice. But his love of Nature and of all living creatures gives his work a poetry and a value. He gave up society and civilisation to wander into the wilderness, where he might enjoy the plant and animal world around him and meditate on the dreams of the Emersonian Pantheism. Like St. Francis of Assisi, he was ready to discourse with his sisters the birds and his brethren the fish. Mr. Page is anxious to rehabilitate Thoreau. He thinks that he 'loved not man the less, but Nature more,' and that his loneliness prepared him all the better for teaching and elevating his fellow-creatures. We do not discuss this question, but leave the beautiful pictures of Nature presented to us to work their own charm and produce their own beneficent influence. It is remarkable that in the present day the scientific study of Nature is connected with a heightened perception of beauty, and Thoreau's 'life and aims' worked in the direction of this combination.

Holiday Rambles are described by a lady, in a series of letters originally addressed to the *Spectator*, in a very bright and original style.† They form a happy combination of home and foreign sketches. They convey the first frank impressions made by different kinds of people and scenery. They will give many useful hints to travellers who are going over ground for the first time. There is a certain thinness and sketchi-

ness about them to those who know thoroughly the localities which the authoress only knows slightly. We must be forgiven if we say that at times she is only acquainted with the fringe of a subject. We should add, however, that the volume altogether reaches a higher level than guide-book literature. There is often a vein of literary allusion, a touch of music, painting, or poetry, passages of criticism and speculation, which are really attractive. She also interests us in her children, her cats and dogs, her home and husband. Her sketches are almost entirely occupied with Switzerland and the Tyrol, Yorkshire and Devonshire. We trust these sketches will send many summer visitants to the lovely secluded districts of Yorkshire and Devonshire, though we would advise them to carry their rambles much farther than is here indicated. The chapter dealing with Salisbury Plain and cathedral struck us as being very pleasing, and the whole volume, though slight, is interesting, fresh, and refreshing.

Mr. Wilson's *Old Edinburgh* is a pleasant work, full of literary and archæological gossip.* He preserves many quaint and interesting particulars which might otherwise perish. His chief authority is the late accomplished antiquary, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe; but all is grist which comes to Mr. Wilson's mill, and his inquiries have been prosecuted through a wide region of research. There are many noteworthy passages in the work. Mr. Gladstone calls himself a Scotchman, and glories in the name, and his family is here localised. 'The town mansion of his ancestor, Thomas Glad-

* *Thoreau: his Life and Aims. A Study.* by H. A. Page. (Chatto & Windus.)

† *Holiday Rambles in Ordinary Places by a Wife with her Husband.* (Daldy, Isbister, & Co.)

* *Reminiscences of Old Edinburgh.* By Daniel Wilson. 2 vols. (Edinburgh, Douglas.)

stone, merchant burghess, at the head of the close, is still one of the most striking features of the Lawn Market. It is a tall structure of wrought ashlar, with corbelled angle and ornamental gables to the street. On shields cut below the corbels of each gable are the initials T. G. and G. B., with the merchant mark of the old burghess. The house was acquired by him in 1631, and is mentioned in an injunction of Charles I., relating to the armed trainbands of the city in 1634, under the name "Thomas Gladstone's Land." Then we have an interesting tradition of Dr. Johnson's brief stay in Edinburgh, when he was Boswell's guest. We are sorry to say that he concealed his better nature, and fully sustained his repute for social savagery. When Home, the Presbyterian minister, produced his tragedy of *Douglas*, the sensational whisper went through Edinburgh that the Reverend Dr. Carlyle had played the part of Young Douglas, and that the Reverend Dr. Blair had assumed female attire and played the part of the heroine. It was gossip, and nothing more; but the disgust of the Edinburgh folk may be imagined. There is a good story told of David Hume. He went to live in the New Town, and when a street sprang up about his house, it was apparently by accident called St. David's-street. His old housekeeper, however, was convinced that it was a studied insult. 'What do you think the ne'er-do-weels hae gane

and painted on our house-front?' When at length Mr. Hume had comprehended the nature of the provocation which so excited the wrath of the good dame, he comforted her with the philosophical reply, 'Tut, Jenny; is that all? Many a better man than he has been called saint.' There is a good deal of interesting mention of Sir Walter Scott. We should say too that the volumes possess a remarkable wealth of illustration.

We have left to the last a charming work which well deserves special mention — Miss Shaw's *Castle Blair*.* It is evidently written for children, and children's books form a kind of literature from which children of a larger growth may learn much. It is a kind of writing which requires an earnest purpose and much delicate tact and taste, which in this instance are very conspicuous. The children are wild romping creatures, but honest as daylight; and in the end the little hero goes to Eton, that he may find his level and learn to rough it. There is an antagonism between this boy and a conscientious narrow-minded land-agent which rather reminds us of that charming work the *Heir of Redclyffe*, in the relations between Guy Morville and his cousin Philip. The authoress has a fine true intuition for child-life, and excels in lifelike delineations of Irish scenery and society.

* *Castle Blair: a Story of Youthful Days.* By Flora L. Shaw. 2 vols. (Kegan Paul & Co.)

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. VII.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

No fairer sight than this the summer noon
Sees ever in 'the leafy month of June ;'
To which in crowds by road or rail repair
The grave and gay, the noble, rich, and fair.

I.

Its site is still marked by the ruins of premises
Sacred of old to the worship of Nemesis.

II.

This widow wavered whether with her
Friends to leave home, or go back thither :
She loved her friends—was tender-hearted—
But home is home, and back she started.

III.

This good old English tippie, dangerous thing,
To the Pierian spring seems the reverse :
If shallow draughts intoxication bring,
More largely drinking only makes us worse.

IV.

A constable with no pretence
To very high intelligence.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the July Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London. E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by June the 10th.

ANSWER TO No. VI (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

| | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Z | I | S | K | A |
| 2. E | D | F | O | U |
| 3. P | S | A | L | M |
| | A | N | A | Z |
| | A | R | | |
| 4. H | E | R | O | |
| 5. Y | O | U | N | G |
| | E | | | |
| 6. R | E | G | A | L |
| | I | A | | |

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abacus, Aces, Acipenser, Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Arno, Beatrice W., Bon Gualtier, Brief, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cat & Kittens, Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Domino, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Excelsior Jack, F. B. H., Frau Clebsch, General Buncombe, Gnat, Gogledd Cymru, Griselda, G. U. E., Half-and-Half, Hampton Courtier, Hazlewood, H. B., Hibernicus, Incoherent, Irene, Jack, Jessica, Kanitbeko, Kew, L. B., Leona, Manus O'Toole, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo, Murra, Nil Desperandum, No Conjuror, Non sine gloria, No. 2, Nunquam non paratus, Old Log, Pud, Puss, Racer, Reynard, Roe, Shaitân, Sir Hans Sloane, Sir Patrick Felis, Smashjavelin, Spes, Tempus Fugit, The Borogoves, The Mad Tea-party, The Snark, Thunder, Tory, Tweedledum, Verulam, Wee Plots, Welsh Rabbit, Ximena, Yours truly, and one without signature—79 correct, and 14 incorrect : 93 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Kew is informed that the Holiday Number of *London Society* will be published on July 1st.

Pleas on behalf of other words for the second light of No. V. have been taken into consideration, but none of these suggested alternative solutions can be accepted as correct answers.

Holiday Number

OF

LONDON SOCIETY.

EDITED BY JAMES HOGG.

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THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

Disobey, ye who will; but ye who disobey must suffer. This law is as certain in its operation as the law of gravitation.



ENO'S FRUIT SALT.

is claimed for it is that it keeps the groundwork of malarious diseases so common to towns and districts which are ill-drained. There is no doubt but that the time will eventually come when fevers and diseases resulting from poisoned blood will be considered as offences against the well-being of the communities at large; but it will, in all probability, be some time yet before it shall have arrived at such a pitch of sanitary perfection. Meanwhile, we cannot withhold a welcome to any specific which may prove a means of preserving or restoring health. The simpler the better, so long only as it is effectual. ENO'S FRUIT SALT has been found an excellent corrective to the digestive organs; and in the Colonies, in India, and in South America has a largely-increasing sale. It is better by far than 'nips;' and amongst the Good Templars—a numerous community all over the world—is recognised not only as a refreshing, but also as a stimulating drink."—*European Med.*, Nov. 1, 1877.

HOW TO AVOID THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF STIMULANTS.—The present system of liver-partaking of too rich foods, as pastry, saccharine and fatty substances, alcoholic drinks, and an insufficient amount of exercise—frequently deranges the liver. I would advise all bilious people, unless they are careful to keep the liver acting freely, to exercise great care in the use of alcoholic drinks, avoid sugar, and always dilute largely with water. Experience shows that porter, mild ales, port-wine, dark cherries, sweet champagne, liqueurs, and brandy are all very apt to disagree; while light white wines, and gin or whisky largely diluted, will be found the least objectionable. ENO'S FRUIT SALT is peculiarly adapted for any constitutional weakness of the liver; it possesses the power of reparation when digestion has been disturbed or lost, and places the invalid on the right track to health. A world of woe is avoided by all who use ENO'S FRUIT SALT; therefore no family should be without it.

FAGGED, WEARY, AND WORN OUT, or any one whose duties require them to undergo Mental Unnatural Excitement or Strain, use ENO'S FRUIT SALT. It allays nervous excitement, depression, restores the nervous system to its proper condition (by natural means). Also as a Refreshing, Cooling, and Invigorating Beverage, use ENO'S FRUIT SALT. It is the BEST PREVENTIVE AND CURE FOR Biliousness, Sick Headache, Skin Eruptions, Impure Blood, Pimples on the Face, Giddiness, Feverishness, Mental Depression, Want of Appetite, Sourness of the Stomach, Constipation, Vomiting, Thirst, &c., and to remove the effects of Errors of Eating and Drinking.

PRESERVING AND RESTORING HEALTH.—The FRUIT SALT acts as simply, yet just as powerfully, on the animal system as sunshine does on the vegetable world; it has a natural action on the organs of digestion, absorption, circulation, respiration, secretion, and excretion, and removes all impurities, thus preserving and restoring health.

A BLESSING IN EVERY HOUSE.—ENO'S FRUIT SALT.—A Lady writes: "Everything, wine or food, ceased to act properly for at least three months before I commenced taking it; the little food could take generally punished me or returned. My life was one of great suffering, so that I must have succumbed before long. To me and our family it has been a great earthly blessing."

INVIGORATING AND INVALUABLE.—"I have used your FRUIT SALT for many years, and have verified the statement that it is not only refreshing and invigorating, but also invaluable, as giving relief in cases of heartburn, sourness of the stomach, and constipation and its great evils. The thanks of the public are due to you for your unceasing efforts to relieve suffering humanity. Long may you live to be a blessing to the world!"

St. Thomas's Vicarage, Annfield Plain, Lintz Green,
Co. Durham, March 1878."

"B. HURST, Ph.D., Vicar of Collierly.

CAUTION.—Examine each bottle, and see the Capsule is marked "ENO'S FRUIT SALT." Without it you have been imposed on by a worthless imitation.

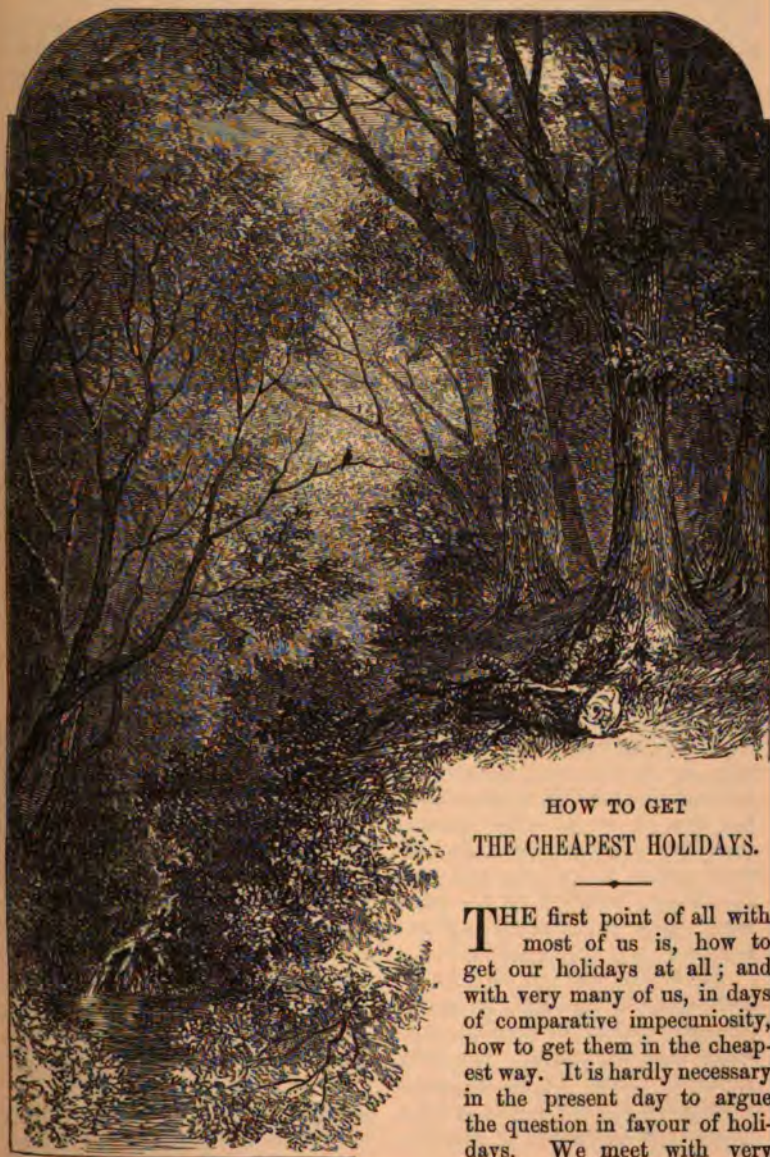
Sold by all Chemists, price 2s. 9d. and 4s. 6d.





LONDON SOCIETY.

The Holiday Number for 1878.



HOLIDAY, '78.

HOW TO GET THE CHEAPEST HOLIDAYS.

THE first point of all with most of us is, how to get our holidays at all; and with very many of us, in days of comparative impecuniosity, how to get them in the cheapest way. It is hardly necessary in the present day to argue the question in favour of holidays. We meet with very

worthy people sometimes who are unconvinced of the very first social axiom of modern life. 'We did very well without them in our time,' argue our highly respectable but extremely fossilised friends; 'and we don't see the necessity of running away to the seaside, and all that sort of thing, every year.' This is the language occasionally employed by the revered authors of our being, or their immediate progenitors, if we give a hint, oblique or direct, that some of the coin which they are doubtless hoarding for us might be advantageously invested in recruiting our energies and those of our belongings, by franking us for a long holiday excursion from our door in starting to our door in returning. The elderly birds do not always 'seem to see it.' They have never explored all the green lanes in their own neighbourhood, nor scaled the hills which bound their own narrow horizon. 'But, my dear sir, or madam,' is the logical rejoinder, 'we have justly left behind us the inactivity and incuriosity of other days. Just as we have lengthened the average of human life, and have cultivated the domestic tub, and have gone in for baths of earth, air, vapour, and medicated water, and have got hold of the telegraph and telephone, and get our news and railway journeys and light wines at a cheap rate, so it has now become an axiomatic matter that we must have holidays, if for no other reason than this—that we can't do our work unless we get the rest and the change supplied by the holiday.' To a candid mind such an argument is simply irresistible.

The idea of cheapness is directly associated with holidays; for in the glorious system of holidays you really save very much. You save in doctor's bills, for the hygienic effect of a holiday is very great; you save in education, for the edu-

cational effect of a holiday ought also to be very great. Man, the great machine of machines, is being rested and lubricated, and getting the wheels and springs repaired, and varnished up generally, and made almost as good again as new. All this can be done after a very costly fashion. It can also be done, with care and management, in a cheap and moderate way. The natural mind prefers the costly fashion. I should like to be commissioned to write a book on the art of expensive holidays; of course all resources being placed at my command by an enterprising and enlightened publisher: the best hotels, couriers, carriages, special trains, *et hoc genus omne*. I could write a publication of that kind with considerable enthusiasm. Also I have ideas of my own on another style of holiday altogether. Those who have tried both may speak with impartiality and equanimity of either. We must admit that impecuniosity is a considerable bane in these present days, at least with a certain proportion of her Majesty's subjects. In these days of competition and expense we do not leave a sufficient amount of margin for our pleasures and pleasant expeditions. There is a grand idea involved in that admirable expression, margin. It has become an absolute necessity—an axiom, we called it a little while ago—that there should be a holiday. It is the great duty of a margin to provide that necessary refreshment. The children are looking pale for the lack of a little fresh air. The good wife needs a change. You, the bread-winner, acknowledge the necessity in your own case. But what with high prices and depressed trade and Turkish and Egyptian stock, you have to study economy in all its branches. Mill and many others have written on political economy.

I wonder why they have not devoted their mighty mental energies to the subject of personal economy.

Let us, then, consider this question of expense; go into a family or cabinet council, and use all necessary plainness of speech. Sometimes a friend will kindly offer to lend you a house in some lovely neighbourhood. This does not happen so very often, but then it is by no means so unfrequent as might be supposed. There are some people who are always offering to lend other people their houses. Thus a popular man or a pleasant young couple may have a perfect shoal of invitations. They may set off and visit a dozen houses, one after another, as long as their time and money hold out. But when you have bought first-class tickets, and have hired cabs and carriages, and tipped servants liberally, and gone in for fresh expenditure in dress, and moved pretty rapidly from house to house, there has really been no saving, but on the other hand there has probably been a considerable accession of expense. The very first point to consider when we aim at cheapness—that is to say, a liberal cheapness—is whether we are to be constantly on the move, or if we are simply to make our headquarters in some locality. The great expense of a tour is that of locomotion. Half the expense is saved if you are in a state of rest instead of a state of motion. The chief secret of cheapness is to be content for the most part to remain quietly in one place.

An exception to a considerable extent arises in the case of walking tours. But even here you have the expense of inns, which is more or less in excess of lodgings. But the walking tourist can always choose his own inn; and if he can get cleanliness, comfort, and good plain food, he has all which is

necessary and does very well. It is the vulgarest idea of a holiday to go into any unusual excess of eating or drinking. I am glad to observe that it is increasingly happens that ladies take part in these walking tours. It is not a bad plan, when there is a party of some half dozen persons, to take a pony basket-carriage to carry wraps and parcels, and render a lift to any lady who may be tired. It is a great mistake in a walking tour that a patient pedestrian should rigidly confine himself to a walk. He will save time and patience and boot-leather, if he is not above taking any chance lift which he can get,—especially if he is going over uninteresting country,—or post, or take the rail. Never disdain a lift, if it is only in a cart. But the main advice for a pedestrian who wishes to travel cheaply, and of course the advice has a still larger extension, is to get beyond railways and the great high-roads, to desert the beaten tracks, to strike out a course for oneself. By these means you get glimpses of fine scenery unspoilt by tourists, and often find yourself heartily welcomed by the friends you make among the natives. Many delicious rambles have I had in Kent and Sussex, in Devon and Cornwall, in South and North Wales, in Devonshire and Yorkshire,—opening up for oneself what is still left unvulgarised in our own sweet rural scenery, and often not paying more than a shilling for a hot supper and a shilling for a bed.

If you take a family to the seaside, to some charming inland place, the great thing to consider is, whether you mean to go at a fashionable or unfashionable time. If you want early peas or early strawberries you must pay for them expensively; but if you will only wait, you will have your peas

and strawberries both cheaper and better. It is very much the same kind of thing in respect to holiday accommodation. I remember, one autumn, having a delicious little house on the Devonshire coast. All around were woods and waters. A pleasant winding path conducted us to the tiny bay, where the clear water rippled over a pebbly beach. Into the little market-place, on a Saturday, came the country people, with much store of fruit, vegetables, and poultry, at most moderate prices; to be exact, meat about eightpence a pound, and poultry four shillings a couple. It was a most fashionable little town; but it so fortunately happened for me that fashion and the devices of the physicians had declared that its season must be a winter season. I had the house for the summer and the early autumn, and its rent was a guinea and a half a week. But on the 1st of October the rent would be three guineas weekly; on the 1st of November it would be six guineas; and by the middle of January it would probably be nine guineas a week. During the season of the year in which I had it, the climate and the country were in the utmost perfection. Perhaps the winter, for some diseased lives, would give the best climate; but you had simply to live on the top of the cliffs instead of beneath them, and the place afforded an admirable summer climate, a climate that was cooler in summer just as it was also warmer in winter. According to my own view, I combined the maximum of enjoyment with the minimum of expense. Because I could not get a winter house cheap at this particular place, I was not convinced that I could not get an admirable winter climate at a most reasonable rate. I had simply to discard the vagaries of fashion and the irrationality of Englishmen.

That which constitutes the softness, mildness, and equability of the climate of the English seaboard is the healing influence of the Gulf Stream. It is the Gulf Stream which prevents the climate of England being that of Labrador. Take, for instance, the case of Devonshire. We might indeed go a great deal more north than Devonshire for our illustration. If you go up the western coast of Scotland, in the Isle of Bute you may find a soft and balmy climate as healthful as Bournemouth, or almost as good as Madeira itself. For the matter of that too, you may for many months in the winter find a delicious climate on the east coast, where the east winds are less felt than in the island itself—until, at least, the regular east winds blow in the spring of the year. During these months you may get palatial rooms at the most reasonable rate, which in summer would cost a little fortune. But let us take up again the crucial case of Devonshire. It has been settled by the wiseacres that Torquay is a winter place, and Ilfracombe a summer place; and consequently in the winter Torquay is comparatively crammed, and Ilfracombe is comparatively deserted. But, judging on abstract grounds, I cannot see the reason why such a distinct final preference should be given to Torquay. Ilfracombe has the same oceanic atmosphere laden with iodine and ozone. It has the same health-giving Gulf Stream conferring all there is of verdure and beauty. On making inquiries I was not at all surprised that, as a matter of fact, the mean temperature of Ilfracombe was actually two degrees higher than that of Torquay the preceding winter, although I am not prepared to say that it was so equable. But in house-rent, vegetables, poultry (I will not say fish), the advantage

would be enormously in favour of Ilfracombe. The hotels have the wholesome habit of reducing their prices during the winter, instead of raising them, as is often the case on the south coast.

I might carry this question of climate still further, in order to show that it is not necessary to go to the most expensive places if we wish to spend the holiday at a health-resort. Even for consumptive patients in the early stage of illness a removal to a northern bracing climate is thought the very best thing. I have known men who have been obliged in absolute despair to go to the north of England or Scotland for the winter, and have found, to their delighted astonishment, that their shattered health has been completely recuperated. I knew a distinguished member of Parliament who was ordered out for his health to the Ural Mountains. The keen air combined with the famous *koumiss* milk—mare's milk consolidated—served for his comparative restoration. Indeed, beyond a certain height consumption is unknown. Before you are sorry that the expense of the Riviera or our own south coast is prohibitive, make sure that you really require a southern climate.

Now let me indicate a way in which I can get cheap holidays. In the course of my experience I have had direct letters of inquiry on the matter, and so I shall be plain and tolerably full in my narrative. Never mind what I am. I may be a clerk in the Bank of England, or a master in a public school, or a curate, or a doctor, or 'a gentleman of the press.' Anyhow, the long-wished-for holiday has come—not with too much time, not with too much money, but, such as it is, it has come at last. With the utmost joy I expend sixpence on *Bradshaw*, and I turn

to investigate the map. I want to see where the lines go, and also where they do *not* go. I have spotted a locality which, I think, will suit me. Judging by the map, although this plan may prove fallacious, I think it may be a dozen miles from a railway-station. The distance from a railway-station would be inconvenient if permanent; but for a temporary sojourn it seems to promise what I want in the way of rest, quietude, cheapness. Somehow I have a few lingering reminiscences of the place, which have probably determined me in the choice of it. A great author has mentioned it in his letters; a great poet in his lines. I have reminiscences of some pictures in the Royal Academy recalling its rocky shores or its inland woods. The first thing I have to do is to verify my vague impressions. London has plenty of reading-rooms where I may find the necessary books. At any rate, I may be sure of finding them in the Reading-room of the British Museum. There I may read up all the history, natural history, legend, topography, of the neighbourhood. There, too, I am sure to find some directory of the neighbourhood. Perhaps I may find the address of somebody I know. The world is not so big as we think; the surface of life is so small that this is not at all unlikely. The parson of the parish will certainly not be offended if I venture to make any inquiries which may suggest themselves. And if the worst comes to the worst, I can just move on to the next place.

I arrive at what is called Moulton-road Station. Moulton is two miles off, and lies on the coast. A carrier's cart goes to Moulton, starting from the Barley Mow, where they brew a white beer peculiar to this part of the

country, pleasant and sparkling, whereof I partake, moderately and with approbation. I find that this carrier's cart goes to Moulton and to a village beyond, and that it practically answers the purpose of an omnibus or stage-coach for the lower orders of society, who rank below gignmanity. In this vehicle I took my seat, that I might see something of the country, and make acquaintance with the people. A very pleasant set of people they were, with a true flavour of the country and seaside. There was plenty of talk going on, confused enough at the time, but afterwards, as I came to know the neighbourhood, gathering purpose and consistency. I heard how all the pasture and woodland between the river and yonder mountain belonged to a great squire, whose yacht had just won a prize in an ocean race; how Lord W. held the lands from where we were to the sea; how the young squire had not long returned from making a tour of the world, and was wanting to get into Parliament soon; how parson had restored the church, and people were huffed at some of his new-fangled doings; how Jem Tregartha had been fined five pounds for poaching, and had brought it out of his pocket as bold as brass, and could well afford to pay it out of the money which he made by his snares and night-lines. On our road we passed a broad shallow pond, where nevertheless the water was up to the axles of the wheels; and then, arched by boughs overhead, it passed through a wilderness-looking country. At one point of it a smart-looking gig was in attendance to bear away one of the most substantial-looking of our party. Very little social inferiority was implied by the use of this humble vehicle. The buxom wives and daughters of small farmers were

passengers, and also small traders taking charge of their merchandise; of course the British bagman taking charge of his parcels. There was only one inn, I was told, at Moulton; the rest being mere beer-shops. As we drew near Moulton London lungs caught the fresh sea air, and soon the broad silvery shield of the sea was outspread before us. The sea ran its fiords, like the fingers of a hand, here and there into the heart of the country. It was high noon when I got to Moulton. On the way down I had stopped at a cathedral city. It is always worth while to stop at a cathedral city. A cathedral is always worth examining, and there are often very interesting archaeological remains in correspondence with it, and good, moderate, old-fashioned inns. Now it was easy to perceive at once that Moulton was a most primitive sort of place. There were two or three delicious villages, with trees of orange and lemon blossoming in the gardens. Only in one single place did I see the placard of lodgings to let. I heard that Lord W. had a rooted aversion to making a fashionable watering-place of Moulton, and always steadily refused to let or sell any land for building. I went to the inn and called for lunch. They brought up a lobster, for which the charge was ninepence, and capital beer from the cellar, cool as if iced, at least as much iced as is safe and advisable. They showed me a pretty bedroom, which, with the use of the parlour, I could have for half a guinea a week. There was only one other resident at the inn, an artist-fellow, who took in a lot of London periodicals, and had books from Mudie's. Unfortunately he had just finished his work, and went away saying he hardly expected to be so comfortable again. For once I was at a

seaside place where there was neither Pier nor Parade. A few homely fishermen were about, mending their nets; and though they had a long talk with me, they never asked for beer. When the fishing-boats came in, I would go down to the beach. The place was rather famous for fish, and some of the Billingsgate salesmen had regular agents. The sale was conducted on the method of the Dutch auction, when the vendor names his own price, and each bid, instead of rising, falls, according to a fixed graduated proportion. As a rule, the large salesmen carry all before them. The fish are rapidly carried off in a tax-cart to the nearest station, and so on to London. If Lord W. wants fish he has to telegraph to London, and they will probably send him down some that have been caught just off his own estate. Still fish was cheap; a certain amount being caught irrespective of the market on the beach, and sold about the villages.

And here let me suggest, as essentially bearing on the subject of cheapness, why in these days of coöperation something should not be attempted in the nature of the buying of fish. It was a favourite idea of Agassiz—I do not profess to say it is a correct one—that the phosphorus in fish makes brain; and in these fierce days of competition we all want to be as clever dogs as we can. Why, then, when we go to the seaside, should not a few families combine to buy their fish at the Dutch auction? A wholesale quantity is of course large; but it would not be a bad thing to live on fish altogether for a few days, now and then, on a stretch. This is not difficult when you have a choice of John Dories, red mullet, turbot, soles, lobsters, whiting. If you want to send presents to your friends they can have fish for

their presents. Sometimes the fish auction is rather early. At Hastings it is about seven, on the beach nearly opposite the old castle. At Brixham it is about four in the afternoon; a very convenient time for visitors from Torquay or Dartmouth. An early market will cause an early rising, a capital thing to give you an appetite for the fish at breakfast; and fish never eat so well as when broiled an hour or two after they have come out of deep water. And while on the subject of fish, and still adhering to our motto of economy, why are the old days past in which every gentleman had a pond as a preserve full of fresh lusty fish? Some men would be able to go and get a carp of several pounds; and what is more delicious than a carp? You would be independent of the caprices either of the fishmonger or of the fish, not to mention winds and waves.

Let me tell, however, how I got on at Moulton. I found the population affable and unsuspicious. They did not present a serried phalanx against me, as is sometimes done by residents against visitants. In fact they looked upon me in a benignant point of view, regarding me as a benighted foreigner who had had the misfortune of having been born away from Moulton, but who was doing his best to retrieve that calamity. There was a little reading-room in the place, to which the Vicar presented his *Times* on the third day after publication; and on depositing a penny in a sort of missionary box, I was free of the room for that day. The Vicar did me the honour of a call; the Vicar's churchwarden, the benevolent *medicus* of the district, fraternised with me. Moreover, I endeavoured to make my tastes aquatic. I went out fishing and laid lobster-pots; I studied the natural aquaria of the rock-pools

at low water; I gathered, cooked, and ultimately devoured sea-laver, which is an excellent dish. It will have been perceived how, by these hardy rustic tastes, I had saved very much in billiards, cigars, and brandy-and-soda. I had left the inn for cheap lodgings, which cost me exactly the same rental and gave me more quietude. The common room was more exposed to invasion than I had calculated on, and on Saturday and Sunday evenings it was a great deal too noisy. The bucolics drank beer by pailfuls. After church-time the wretched agriculturist made a beginning at his six gallons, and by and by he did not know whether he had had his dinner or not. He might make sure that his wife and children had not. By and by, too, thanks to the vicar, I was taken into that lovely villa, with the orange and lemon trees adjoining; and as all roads lead to Rome, so I am now never able to take a holiday without journeying in the direction of Moulton.

I ought to say something about cheap foreign travelling during the holidays. In the country districts of France, Italy, Norway, there is very pleasant and cheap travelling so long as you keep to tolerably fresh unhackneyed grounds. Tourists raise prices wherever they go; and so if you want cheapness you should keep out of the way of tourists. If you are a bachelor, with a knapsack and a fishing-rod, you can do very well in Norway. But there is no European country where you may not do cheaply if you keep to the old towns and the quiet valleys and mountains. You will do all the better if you will talk the talks and drink the drinks of the country. Even if you are not a bachelor, as soon as you have established your nest, go upon the excursion system with the hardier members of your family.

The chief financial consideration in either case is the ease of transit to and fro. You have to see whether the lighter living expenses do not make up for the heavier travelling expenses. A friend has been telling me that he finds it cheaper to take his wife, sons, daughters, maids and man, tutor and governess, to spend the afternoon of the year in Switzerland or Germany than to keep up his expensive establishment at home. Then of course there are all the advantages of travel, change, education, society, the increased mental and bodily activity. Even when you have allowed for a little imposition, it may be wise and cheap policy to go. Or if you do not care to go from England to the Continent, go from one part of England to another. In these days, when there is a great congestion of society into various centres, when our great cities and fashionable places, and, most of all, London itself, is rapidly absorbing more and more of the population, it is easy to get into snug country quarters, or for a moderate sum to rent a house for a season in some country town, whose inmates are smitten with the desire of 'touring it.' If you go into an old-fashioned neighbourhood, you will find rent low, provisions cheap, the neighbours friendly; and so rich is this grand old historic England of ours that within a moderate circuit there are abundant objects of natural, archaeological, and social interests. I have said that you will find the neighbours friendly; but it is always best to get an introduction of some kind. One real introduction is as good as half a dozen. No one knew English scenery and character better than the late Lord Lytton, and it was often his plan to take up his abode in some comparatively obscure locality, and study all its surroundings.

And now to summarise these useful observations. Be willing to give an intelligent attention to the subject of cheapness—that is, the saving of unnecessary expense, and the abbreviation of unnecessary trouble. Learn to get the things you want, and, what is more, to do without the things which you do not really want. Be content to be rather in your own society than in that of a crowd. You may have the command of the most fashionable localities if you will be content to go thither at unfashionable times, and this without the least sacrifice of substantial advantages.

Don't be mean, but at the same time do not be afraid of being thought so. Do not be afraid of going third class, and carrying your own bag, and making your own bargains, and doing your own marketing. Define your plans clearly, adjust ends to means, form the design of home or distant travel, and carry out your programme to the letter; rely upon Nature, upon science, upon yourself, for your interest and amusement, instead of upon a lavish expenditure. Most people who take long and regular holidays construct an art of getting those holidays cheap as well as good.



HER HOLIDAY.

A Husband's Story.

Yes, it was to be her holiday—'all for her.' Nobody else was to have any share in it except myself—that is, if going as her courier, paymaster, and general factotum could be called having a share in a holiday.

We had been married nearly ten years, and what with the cares of home and the training of numerous olive-branches, she had never had any chance of a rest. Of course we had been to the seaside frequently, and all that sort of thing; but then, surrounded by children and nurses, these trips had only been a continuation of the general London responsibilities, plus the worries and inconvenience of lodgings or hotels. Moreover, within the last few years there had been some trouble in her family, which had acted very prejudicially upon her sensitive and highly-strung nature. So now we were going away alone—going to leave all the children at home in the charge of grandmamma—were going abroad for six weeks together wherever she liked. Her will was to be paramount; I was to be her slave—to pay the bills and look after the luggage. Her affection and untiring devotion to her duties deserved no less. She had thoroughly qualified herself for enjoying a holiday; she had earned it. 'Italy,' she said, 'where there was sunlight, beauty, and quiet.' Good! I waved my magician's wand, rubbed the lamp, or spread the carpet, or did any one of those wonderful things which necromancers of yore were wont to do when desiring to be transported to distant places—

or rather I resorted to the modern golden equivalent for such proceedings—and we found ourselves certainly as if by magic at Lucerne. Thence we were to take it easy, and so jogged along over the St. Gothard Pass, and dropped into Italy at the Locarno end of the Lago Maggiore.

By this time she was beginning to enjoy herself thoroughly; she had got over the fatigue, and already looked much as she did the day I married her. Yes, it was very delightful to see her so well and happy.

'Why, it is like a honeymoon over again,' she said; 'or rather it is as if there had been no break, and that it was only the continuation of those early days.'

We spent hours and hours upon the lake beneath the awning of one of the flat-bottomed boats, those first inceptions of the gondola; or we wandered up to the picturesque old convent or sanctuary of the Madonna del Sasso, set like a jewel amidst the blue hills behind the town. And there in the soft autumn evenings we sat and watched the glorious sunsets, and the boundless panorama of alp, plain, and lake, whilst the bell in the campanile hard by called the peasantry to vespers, and the pealing of the deep-toned organ resounded through the choir.

We selected Locarno as a halting-place, because it was at that time, and is so partly still, out of the rush of the tourist. A primitive place, with simple civil people willing to serve and oblige honestly,

and without having for the first question in their minds, 'What shall we get by it?' Thus we came to know some of them living up there near the sanctuary, and to speak or nod when we met from time to time.

Notably amongst these was a mother and child—a sweet little chubby cherub of a boy about four. The Italian folk in the north there are not as a rule handsome, but this mother was an exception, and the child was like her. Superior too in all respects, she looked better born, bred, and nurtured; nay, there was even a look of culture and refinement about her.

Immensely attracted by this pair, my wife particularly would lose no opportunity of giving the little one a pat and a kiss, and of exchanging a pleasant word or two in the best Italian she could muster with the mother, who by degrees on her part began to speak a little English, and to take us into her confidence. She explained that she had married an Englishman, a gentleman, she declared, who had died suddenly more than four years ago, and just before the little one was born. His family never knew of the marriage; he had intended, she said, to proclaim it, and face the consequences of the *mésalliance*, as it would be called; but his sudden end prevented this, and to this day she believed her existence even was unknown to her husband's people. But she did not care; he had left her just enough to live upon; and she had come to dwell at Locarno, where her aged father lived, and whose last days she desired to soothe. She was quite contented with the humble life she led there in yonder little wooden chalet—at least, until the good God should take him to his rest.

Would we enter the abode and speak to her father? He was a

very handsome old man, a native of Tuscany who had seen better days. *Mai* it mattered little that, or why he had come so far north.

Her name, we asked.

Ah, her maiden name was one that in past times had struck terror to the foes of liberty; she would rather not mention it. Her father, even, had considered it wise to drop it, and had adopted her surname, her married name, the name of her husband, that is.

What, had he taken an English name?

No, not an English name; her husband had been naturalised as an Italian, had changed his name for reasons—they did not signify—and he was known as Giorgio Vianero, she was Lucia.

Of course we went in and spoke to the old farmer-like man, who, partially paralysed, always sat by the window of his neat little house. He received us with the grace of a prince, regretted that his infirmities prevented him from doing the honours of the neighbourhood, so beautiful as it was.

Naturally we looked in upon him more than once, but still it was his grandchild that was the attraction; my wife declaring that little Paolo was the veriest darling she had ever seen, that he reminded her of our youngest, and that she should like to carry him off, probably because we had not enough of our own.

Now she was a woman not given to morbid fancies, thoroughly healthy, with plenty of common sense. So I was a little surprised at this extravagant admiration, and to hear her say that the child bore any resemblance to ours. I could see none; but it was 'her holiday,' and she was not to be crossed.

Well, if I was surprised by this, judge how much more so I was when she suddenly one morning announced her wish to return home.

'We have not been away three weeks,' I mildly protested.

'No,' she said; 'but I have got a strange longing to see the children; I can't bear to be away from them any longer. I never have been away from them two days, much less two weeks, before, and I can't bear it; I must go back.'

'And leave thus suddenly your pretty little *protégé* on the hill up there? I ventured to say.

'Yes,' she answered; 'that is the reason, that is what has made me wish to go. I mean the sight of that mother's love for her child makes me envious; I want to be with my own.'

What could I say? It was her holiday, to do as she pleased with; if she pleased to cut it short, she must.

'We will be off to-night, love,' I said; but inwardly I was grieved, saddened, not only by the disappointment, but because, seeing that we had excellent accounts from home, this strange freak had something morbid in it, unlike her. Yet there was no appeal, and I began making arrangements for our departure.

'You will go up and say good-bye to the little chap, your friend?' I asked.

'Certainly,' she answered; 'you will come with me, won't you?'

'We will go at once,' I said. I was the slave, I had nothing to do but to obey.

It was a wild and gusty day for August, and the landscape looked less inviting than usual, as we ascended the zigzag path leading to the sanctuary a little above which on the hill-side lay the home of our new friends. At one of the angles near the top of this zigzag the path passed perilously close to a steep precipice, which for some distance formed one bank of a mountain stream as it came tearing down over a rocky bed. This

spot was a great height from the level of the lake, and the precipice itself just there was some forty feet above the river. A few rough bushes made a feeble parapet on the broken ground at the actual edge, but beyond these there was nothing but a sheer down wall of rock. As we reached this corner we saw fluttering in the wind what looked at first like a handkerchief hanging from one of the bushes, but which proved on our coming closer to be the garment of a child who was standing at the very verge of the chasm.

'How dangerous!' exclaimed my wife; 'who can have left a child in such a place?'

It was a solitary walk this, especially at midday, and we had not met a creature since we cleared the outskirts of the town, except an old monk toddling down upon some mundane errand.

'Ah!' she cried, as we got still nearer, 'why it is—yes, I declare—why, it is dear little Paolo himself. Good gracious! he has strayed away down here alone to look for blackberries, no doubt; and as she spoke she rushed forward, and seizing the child by the skirt drew it back from the perilous edge over which it was craning. As I came up we both saw that the little creature was crying bitterly, and he immediately began pointing down towards the stream, and lisping out, 'Mia madre, mia madre!'

I bent over and looked down in the direction the little one was pointing, and to my dismay among the rocks at the verge of the river beheld, lying prostrate thirty feet below, the motionless form of the mother.

Then ensued a scene which I will not dwell upon. I flew up to the sanctuary for assistance. My wife, clasping the little one in her arms, hastened down to a place where it was just possible by a very

rough scramble to get round to the bed of the river. Here I and those whom I had brought with me presently joined her, and we made our way to the luckless woman. She was not dead, but quite insensible, and after infinite trouble and care we managed to carry her up to her home, my wife with Paolo in her arms preceding us, and breaking the sad news to the aged father.

The only sort of medical aid obtainable in that primitive place came from the sanctuary, and soon an old monk, to whom the natives all seemed to defer, was in attendance, and after a careful examination of the patient pronounced that by a great mercy no bones were broken, but that the poor woman was suffering from concussion of the brain, and that some weeks might elapse before she would be about again.

'Do you still hold to your determination of returning home?' I said to my wife, when the excitement and the sorrow which this catastrophe had caused were a little abated; for I own I was selfish enough to hope that out of this evil good might come in the shape of making her prolong her holiday. The hope was realised.

'No,' she answered; 'perhaps I can be of some use here; I will not go back yet. This little one will want a mother's care now: I will be that mother, for I love him more than ever, and I wish more than ever that he belonged to me.'

I need hardly say that under other circumstances I should have entirely objected to her assuming such maternal responsibilities; that I should have pointed out that it was no duty of hers, a well-born lady, in this fashion to look after the offspring of an unknown peasant woman; and that there were plenty of neighbours willing and

ready to undertake the task, who were really the proper people, &c.

But what could I do? Was not 'her holiday'? had I not missed a hundred times to con- to her every wish, whim, or cap—because I thought she had—and I never expected to be put to this kind of test, for had I married a sensible woman? I was puzzled; but I could only console myself by saying to myself, 'They are strange creatures, women; one never knows them—no, not after ten years the closest intimacy.'

So we stayed on; she devoted the greater part of her time to attendance upon the sick woman (who still lay unconscious) her child, whose lisping and perfect words had told us plainly that it was while staring over the edge of the precipice to gather blackberries for him his mother had lost her foot and fallen headlong down. My wife would spend hours by bedside. I ventured to restrain her, and got a severe snarl for my pains.

One evening about a week after the catastrophe, whilst I was waiting for her at a spot hard by the sanctuary where we often sat, came up to me in the most extraordinary frame of mind. I was alarmed; I had never seen her with an equable temperament so disturbed.

'O Walter,' she exclaimed, 'I have just come from the sick woman, and I have had such a shock! She has regained consciousness, but not her senses, and the good *frate*, who watches her always, tells me frequently of her fits in such cases.'

'But what of that? why should it excite you so?' I asked, mystified by my wife's words.

'Ah, I don't know, I cannot tell you; my hopes, my beliefs have hardly taken form yet;

come quickly with me up to the house. O Walter, it is all so wonderful! Come, let us get on faster; I want so to get back, that you and I both may listen to Lucia Vianero's broken words, prove their meaning, and so clear up a doubt that—'

'What do you mean?' I cried. 'What can she have said to so strangely move you?' and inwardly thought, 'O, that I had never consented to "her holiday"!''

'I will tell you, if you will only hurry on as fast as you can. Signs of animation set in about an hour ago, and her first words were, "Paolo, Paolino." I held the boy up to her, but she took no heed of him, and went on murmuring another name over and over again so often, that I felt quite mysteriously affected. It was—' But here reaching the door of the chalet, my wife hurried me to the bedside.

The old monk held up a warning finger as we entered; we hardly dared to draw a breath as we listened to Lucia's low unconscious tones.

'Giorgio, Giorgio mio,' she was saying in Italian, like one who talks in a dream, 'never tell of our marriage: they will not love me, they will neglect me. Hide it, and the little one too; do not let them see him; they would break his heart with coldness, they would not even own him! Yes, perhaps your sister might, for she loved you, Giorgio mio; you have told me so. She felt for you, and wept for you, and knew why you went away, and came to live in the midst of sunny skies and beautiful pictures. Ah, well, you can tell her if you like; she would love Paolino for your sake. Look at him, Giorgio. Kiss him!'

Here she seemed once more to lapse into unconsciousness, and the good *frate* said,

'Ah, poor Lucia, her mind wanders back to her marriage, and mingling past and present, she speaks of what never was; the father never saw the child.'

'Did you know her husband, then?' inquired my wife in Italian.

The *frate* shook his head; 'Only the circumstances of the marriage.'

'Tell me, what were they?' she exclaimed, clasping her hands in an agony of excitement.

'Simple, very simple,' said the holy man, quite unmoved, and shrugging his ample shoulders; 'a young Englishman, an artist, living in Florence, and who had made Italy the land of his adoption, and who took an Italian name, fell in love with Lucia, who was his model, and married her; not an unusual occurrence amongst your countrymen, I believe,' he added, turning to me.

I was bewildered; did not know in the least what to make of all this, and I have no doubt I looked as stupidly helpless as I felt.

'And then?' eagerly inquired my wife, seizing the *frate's* arm, and looking into his face, after casting a glance of unutterable scorn upon me.

'He made a little home for her, and everything promised well for their happiness, when he was taken suddenly ill, broke a blood-vessel, and died in Lucia's arms.'

'Do you know what his English name was?' here again hurriedly inquired my wife.

'What can you possibly want to know that for?' I interposed in English, quite in the dark as to what she was driving at.

'O Walter, Walter! how stupid you are!' she answered, throwing more and more contempt into her words and manner; 'does nothing suggest itself to you? Can't you guess what I am thinking of? Tell me,' she said, again repeating her question in Italian, and turning to

name of Lucia's husband; do you know what it was?'

'Si, signora, si; but I cannot reveal it; it was made known to me under the seal of confession.'

Seeing that she was again about to urge the *frate* to grant her request, I entreated her to be silent, and to look after little Paolo, who was climbing up to his mother and trying to make her play with him.

'Ah!' she then exclaimed, 'dear little fellow; do look at him, Walter, and then think of his father's assumed Italian name—Vianero: think what its English equivalent means.'

More bewildered than ever, I obeyed her command, and began to think, whilst she, once more in Italian, earnestly entreated the *frate* to tell her the name.

'For mercy's sake, let me know,' she said. 'I am not asking out of idle curiosity, but only that love and service may be rendered to the memory of the dead. I feel that I am on the point of a discovery; tell me, am I not right in believing that his name was George Blackway?'

The old monk started at these words, and so did I; for this was the name of my wife's only brother, whose death was the piece of family sorrow referred to at starting.

A bit of a scapegrace, with a strong turn for art, and never understood by his father, he had gone to Rome years ago—long before I knew the family—had expatriated himself, and, with the little competence he possessed, had entirely withdrawn himself from all his early associations. His sister alone at long intervals had tidings of him, and at length we heard, but not till long after the event, that he had died in Florence suddenly. There was a rumour that he had

had been naturalised as an Italian; but nothing very definite ever came to light.

And now, what was happening? Why, that we had here come upon a trace of his latter days, and had found in this obscure corner of the world the pretty Italian woman he had married.

'Yes,' exclaimed my wife, turning with an air of triumph to me; 'and perhaps, Walter, you can now understand what it was that drew me from the first towards this woman and child, and why the little creature has inspired me with such a deep affection. It was the mysterious and subtle instinct of kinship, of blood relationship, for this baby-boy is my brother's child;' and with these words she seized the little fellow, clasped him to her bosom, and wept copiously.

The matter was clear to me now at last; but who on earth could have expected such a *dénouement*, or that she should have been led to the only spot where she could have gained any tidings of her brother?

And yet so it was, and this discovery was the result of 'her holiday,' that treat which I had designed 'all for her.' Of course we had an addition to our family; of course the contract for her holiday would not have been completed if I had interposed any views of mine, and had prevented her carrying off in the end the young semi-Italian scaramouch to add to our own collection.

However, I am bound to say I believe she might not have pressed this point had not it been for the fatal effect of the accident, which after all terminated in Lucia's death, and consequently for the child having thus, as it were, fallen to our charge as his natural guardians. It was all very sad and miserable, the end of our time at

Locarno involving numerous complications with the local law. We were detained there till the end of October; for the old *padrone* departed this life soon after his daughter, and we had some difficulty in proving our right to the child.

Our right to the child! Humph! Truly women are wonderful beings;

and *she* had instinctively discovered this right, had discovered it through that mysterious, delicate, and subtle intuition to which our masculine and grosser natures are entire strangers. She was quite correct from the first. Little Paolo has grown up marvellously like his youngest cousin; even I can see it now.

A SUMMER-DAY DREAM.

A MAIDEN is dreaming
This fair summer-day,
While sunbeams are streaming
And leaves are at play,
And wooing winds whisper,
And sweet echoes stray.

'The gleam of the river
Is golden as light;
The tiny leaves quiver
With thrills of delight;
My love cometh—never,
Or comes he to-night?

'O fair golden river,
You bore him away;
O stream laughing ever,
O leaflets at play,
Some message deliver
To cheer me to-day!

'The brimming wave swimmeth
And breaks on the strand;
No message it bringeth,
Though waiting I stand.'

* * * *

The slow shadows stealing
O'er river and stream,
No secret revealing
To startle her dream,
Yet know of glad tidings,
Though silent they seem.

While daylight is dying
And cloudbright is near,
And winds faintly sighing
Break low on her ear,
Swift footsteps are flying
O'er meadow and mere.

A maiden is dreaming—
The summer day's past,
The sun's golden beaming
Has faded at last.

* * * *

Ah, happy young dreamer,
Her heart is at rest;
Her lover's arms hold her
Safe clasped to his breast!

RITA.



Lo and behold, being numerous, communications with the local law. We were detained there till the end of October; for the old *policie* departed this life, soon after his daughter, and we had some difficulty in proving our right to the land.

Our right to the bill!! Humph!! Truly men are wonderful beings;

and she had instinctively discovered this right, had discovered in that that mysterious, delicate and sensitive intuition, to which our reason and grosser natures are so strangers. She was quite so from the first. Little Paul grown up marvelously like his youngest cousin; even I can see now.

A SUMMER-DAY DREAM.

A maiden is dreaming
This fair summer-day,
While sunbeams are streaming
And leaves are at play,
And budding winds whisper,
And sweet colours stray.
The gleam of the river
Is golden as light;
The tree-leaves quiver
With tremble of delight;
My love is another—never,
Or comes he to-night?
O fair golden river,
You bore him away;
O stream laughing o'er,
O bubbles at play,
Some message deliver
To dear time to-day!
The troutlings were swimming
And bubbles on the strand;
No more seen, if I might
The golden-bellied stand!
* * * *

The slow shadows stealing
O'er river and stream,
No secret revealing
To startle her dream,
Yet know of glad tidings,
Though silent they seem
While daylight is dying
And cloudlight is near,
And winds faintly sighing
Break low on her ear,
Swift footsteps are flying
O'er meadow and mere.
A maiden is dreaming—
The summer day's past,
The sun's golden beaming
Has faded at last.
* * * *
A happy young dreamer,
Her heart is at rest;
Her lover's arm hold her
Safe clasped to his breast.
BETA.



A SUMMER-DAY DREAM,



WALKS IN CAPRI.

I.

CAPRI has been compared by her lovers—which are legion—to a sphinx, a sarcophagus, an advanced sentinel, an amphitheatre, and a wreck of Eden. If the reader, personally unacquainted with the island, yet with this large choice of similes before him, fails to acquire a perfectly clear and accurate idea of its general appearance, we must despair of conveying one to a person of such a sadly unimaginative temperament as he has thus proved himself to be.

Yet Capri, like most islands, has a strong individuality. Sufficient to her small self, there she lies; complete, complacent, isolated, though but one hour's row from Massa, the nearest village on the mainland, and two from Sorrento, whence the excursion is usually made. This 'out of the world' feeling is caught by the stranger and tourist. Other islands seem more closely connected with their neighbours, near or remote. Capri is a little sphere *à part*. Be she grave, be she gay, she weeps or rejoices alone.

Something of this character is traceable in her history too. She has been a pet possession, an emperor's toy, singled out for special notice and desire. So her life, like that of beauty in general, has not been all love and idleness and enjoyment. Wars and fightings, in classic, mediæval, and modern times, have again and again broken the even tenor of her way, as the crumbling fortresses crowning the rugged heights bear ample witness to this day.

HOLIDAY, '78.

To begin at the beginning. Capri was born, it is said, of volcanic origin, having once formed part of the mainland. How she came by her name is a mooted point. Whether it be Phœnician, or from Capræ, island of the goats, let antiquarians decide. Her youth was passed under the rule of the Greek colony - republic of Naples or Neapolis. Not till the reign of the Emperor Augustus did she fall under Roman dominion, being exchanged by him with the Neapolitans for her opposite neighbour the island of Ischia.

After the fall of Rome, Capri shared the fortunes and misfortunes of Naples, under Goth conquerors, Byzantine conquerors, French, Spanish, and Austrian princes. In late years the most stirring incidents in her career have been her capture by the English under Sir Hudson Lowe, during the war with Napoleon in 1806, and her recapture by the French two years afterwards. It is only by a great stretch of imagination that a traveller in the Capri of to-day can realise the past vicissitudes of this speck in the sea. At least, he may fail to believe she has seen the last of them. Brightness and peace are the leading features of her aspect. 'Abandon all care, ye who come hither,' should be the motto to meet us on landing, as, after a lazy two hours in a boat under easy sail, we set foot at last on the little beach, where we are accosted instantly by a cluster of girls with pretty faces and pretty names—Carmelas, Pascarellas, Costanza, Rosinas—who welcome us cordially and gracefully to their shore.

but fight ferociously with one another for the privilege and profit of carrying our luggage up the hill for us, on their heads, according to the local custom.

A walking tour on an island some four miles long by one and a half, may strike a rash observer as unlikely to be fruitful in incident or to occupy more than a couple of days. Many, acting on this conviction, come over by steamer from Naples or Sorrento, and depart the same evening or the next, flattering themselves that they have seen Capri, and taking with them, for their *impressions de voyage*, a general sensation of sea-sickness in the first place, and, in the second, a trio of associations—things to be thought of in connection with the island—the Emperor Tiberius, the Blue Grotto, and Capri wine. Though it be through these that Capri is best known to fame, yet, when all is said and seen, it is neither by her vintage, nor her antiquities, nor even her grottoes of many colours—blue grottoes and white, red grottoes and green—that she takes hold of our affections. But no real idea of her charms can be gained in a few hours. A fortnight of diligent exploring is the least that should be allowed; and what is wanted for the undertaking is not so much great seafaring as good walking powers, an exceptionally stout pair of boots, and, for the less sure-footed, if an alpenstock or some substitute be to hand, so much the better.

We have an earnest of hard things to come, in the steep ascent to the village of Capri from the landing-place or Marina Grande. There are hotels on the beach, true; but this half-hour's climb would be a serious preamble to our tomorrow morning's walk, so there is really no choice but to make the little town above our head-quarters during our visit. The narrow-

paved footway runs between the high stone walls of the vineyards and oliveyards spread over the hill-side; and the pilgrimage is beguiled by the chatter of our fair escort, whose loquacity and curiosity are practically infinite. The town itself is admirably situated on a mountain ridge, commanding the lower part of the island and commanded by the rugged upper heights. Here four hotels dispute the palm. But no, literally speaking, this must at once be conceded to the Hotel Pagano, beloved of Germans, and famous among other things for the palm-tree that is the most conspicuous object in its garden.

Capri boasts a market-place and a cathedral. But neither is a proud specimen of its kind. Two cobblers' shops, three or four unpretending *cafés*, a repository of silk scarfs, and the post-office make up the grand market square. The so-called 'cathedral' is quite as ugly as modern Italian churches generally are, which is saying much. 'To prevent disappointment,' be it understood at once that of works of art there are none to be seen in this island retreat. Only he who is sated with sculptured marble and gorgeous canvases will do well to come hither and fall in love with Nature for a change.

If you have seen nothing south of the Italian peninsula, you will at first be chiefly struck by the strange half Oriental touches in which Capri abounds. They appear in the architecture of the dwelling-houses—walls often of enormous thickness, domed roofs without, vaulted ceilings and tiled floors within, and walks round the house-tops. Some of these buildings have a blank sealed appearance, and we almost expect to see some veiled Moorish lady taking an airing on the roof, after the fashion approved of the Easterns.

The vegetation has the same

novel character. Olives we know, and vines we know; oranges, lemons, myrtles, arbutus, and rosemary are familiar shrubs; the lentisk, tamarisk, mastick, and others less so, however; and the carouba-tree with its huge pods is a stranger, one whose acquaintance we are happy to make here, since it grows to a considerable size and throws a shade we shall find extremely welcome, the perforated canopy of the olive-groves affording no protection whatever against the glare and heat of an Italian sun.

But the most conspicuous and characteristic plant on the island is the prickly pear. It overgrows the cliffs, forms the hedges, covers the wastes, appears in gardens, on walls, everywhere, with its curious clustered massive spiny leaves and red juicy fruit, as pleasant to the eyes as it is hopelessly insipid to the taste. To see the cactus taking the place of the bramble makes us feel ourselves far from home indeed.

II.

We take the village of Capri itself as the starting-point of our excursions. It is indeed a kind of focus, whence diverge the paths leading to the heights and depths, the nooks and corners, of the island that we hope thoroughly to explore. Every one of the hills rising round us will repay an ascent: each affords a different view, all rivalling one another in beauty. There is the Tuoro Grande, crowned by the telegraph; the San Michele with the remains of an old fort; the Castiglione with the ruins of an old castle, the Castello di Barbarossa, another broken fortress, named after one Barbarossa, a famous Corsair who ravaged the island in the Middle

Ages. There is the eastern headland 'Lo Capo,' with its Roman ruins; and, at the west end, the Monte Solaro, which rises to the height of two thousand feet above the sea.

Our first walk takes us up to the eastern promontory of 'Lo Capo,' and the site of Tiberius' Villa Jovis. He had twelve altogether, in different parts of Capri, dedicated to various deities, but of the other eleven the slightest possible traces remain, and of the few tottering walls and mouldering chambers which are all now to be seen of the Villa Jovis there is not much to be said, except that they are fast falling to decay, and picturesquely overgrown with wild vines and fig-trees and the trailing caper plant. We repeat, the antiquary and art-student had best study Capri in the Museum at Naples. We shall hardly reconstruct Tiberius' villa in our mind's eye from these poor fragments.

The point beyond is marked by a wretched little chapel, where abides a hermit, so old that he looks as if he might have been chaplain to Tiberius. Like a spider in his web he sits there to catch the flies as fast as they come. Smilingly he receives the visitors, as also their tribute money. The offertory is supposed to be for the maintenance of himself and his chapel, though what the precise object of maintaining a hermit and a hermitage on this eminence may be it is hard to determine.

We look over the cliffs, which here rise to a tremendous height. We lose our heads, figuratively, and our hats literally if we are not careful. There is always a wind on the premises here, and many an enthusiastic German, forgetting all else in his ecstasies, has thus doffed involuntarily to *Æolus*, and one has deemed the circumstance worthy to be immortalised in verse,

and indited a poetic 'Farewell' to his lost gray wideawake!

Certainly nothing is easier than to forget everything in the mere enjoyment of the sense of sight, as we stand here; with before us a magnificent view of the Bay of Naples, the Sorrentine peninsula, and the Bay of Salerno beyond. In our ardour we may think we see the temples of Pæstum in the dimmest of distances. But this is a poet's or archæologist's dream; for they are not, in point of fact, visible except to the eye of faith. But the islands of the sirens lie before us, desolate strangely-shaped rocks that take the most beautiful purple and violet hues imaginable in certain lights. A rare outlook had the terrible old Emperor from his favourite villa.

This spot above all others seems haunted by reminiscences of the tyrant, and according to a popular legend, deep in the interior of this mountain, underneath the ruins of his country house, Tiberius still sits, mounted on a bronze horse. His figure is of clay, but both he and his horse have eyes of diamonds. He was seen thus once by a Capriote peasant, who crept into a mountain cleft, but never again could he succeed in finding the spot.

In retracing our steps from the promontory, if we turn aside from the path a little below the Villa Jovis, we reach the famous Salto di Tiberio, a declivity of some nine hundred feet, down which tradition tells that the Emperor was in the habit of precipitating his victims. How far there is truth in this and other stories current about him and his crimes is what can hardly be known. It has become the fashion to pooh-pooh such tales as fictions. Certainly one would gladly give his highness's memory the benefit of the doubt, if possible. Only, on the other hand, such an

iniquitous reputation as he left behind him, however incrustated with legend and exaggeration, must have had its origin in facts sufficiently black to begin with, and we doubt the chances of white-washing his memory.

This so-called 'Leap' is a giddy spot, and after we have stood for a time gazing into the abyss and mercilessly throwing down big stones—which seem to take an unconscionable time falling, till we hear them crash below, and go springing from rock to rock—it is with a sense of relief that we turn our back on the precipice, nor are we sorry to recruit our nerves by rest and refreshment at the homely little *caffè* close at hand.

Bread, cheese, fruit, wine, and tarantella may here be had at moderate charges. The wine, despite its high-sounding name, 'Tiberius' Tears,' has no imperial quality, unless its badness may count for one. But the tarantella, which we first saw danced here, made amends for all shortcomings. The mistress of the *caffè* summoned a couple of girls, who left their work in the fields, and extemporised a performance for our benefit, to the accompaniment of a tambourine, played by an old woman. The orchestra should include, besides, a flute, castagnettes, a jew's-harp, and a kind of wooden rattle; but the full band is seldom forthcoming, and an accordion usually covers all deficiencies.

A Capri girl seems always ready to fall into a tarantella under any circumstances and at the slightest provocation. The taste for it must run in the blood of the people. The performances got up at the hotels for the entertainment of visitors have, it is true, something ungenuine about them. Still the dance remains a national dance, and the love for it survives in full. In Capri you may constantly hear

the natives dancing it in their own houses, and the specimen we saw in this lonely spot, amid the ruins of a Roman emperor's splendour and the reminiscences of his infamy, had local colour enough to satisfy the most fastidious. The two girls, with their bare feet, flying hair, wild gestures and shouts, and rapid vehement movements might have been Mænads under the sway of some mysterious half-inspired madness. The looker-on is dense, indeed, if he does not at last catch something of their spirit and long to join in their evolutions. Then suddenly the spell is broken; the tambourine drops, the Bacchanals cease, and the Bacchantes—plain girls again—come to you for a franc for their trouble.

III.

THERE is but one road on the island. It leads from Capri to Ana (or Upper) Capri, the only other village in the place, and is of recent creation. Of the five hundred and odd steps cut in the rock, which were the previous approach to Anacapri, it is needless to speak. Except in numerous pictures, where their memory is safely preserved, we shall see their face no more. Landscape-painters, who knew the island before the innovation, declare that it has spoilt all; that Capri, without its famous flight of stairs, is no longer worth seeing; and so forth. Probably, if Tiberius could rise from the dead he would say that the interest of the island had lain in his villas, and had disappeared with them. Its mediæval masters, on the other hand, would be horrified to find their castles vanishing, and declare that the place had lost all local colour. Lastly, Capri, sad to say, is not content with her one road. A second is in course of contem-

plation, to lead from the landing on the Marina to the town above. And doubtless when next we visit the island, and find conveyances plying for hire on the beach, and we have to mount the hill in a jolting fly, instead of on foot or donkey-back with Carmelas and Pascarellas in attendance, and houris carrying our portmanteaus on their heads, it will then be our turn to cry out that Capri '*non é piu com' era prima.*'

Only the walk to Anacapri was so particularly pleasant in itself that it never occurred to us to quarrel with the existence of the road. Here we have a diorama of exquisite, ever-changing sea-views. Vesuvius, Castellamare, Naples, the islands—Ichia and Procida—on the one hand; on the other the open sea stretching away to the invisible African shore. Fresh beauty crops up round every corner as we mount higher and higher, and come at last upon Anacapri, lying near the western extremity of the island, screened by the heights from view from the parent town.

Travellers are apt to find nothing worth noticing here. It is their notice, however, and not Anacapri, which is at fault. For those who take interest in the characteristics of the islanders (a peculiar people), and who complain of Capri as sadly modernised and civilised, smoothed, and cut and clipped and tourist-ridden, and fallen from her primitive simplicity, may study the Capri of once upon a time in the Anacapri of to-day; for the finger of progress has not got so far as the latter.

The population is about half that of Capri, but the houses are scattered, and with their gardens cover more ground. The peace of the place is indescribable. Capri is a bear-garden by comparison. Although the latter is at the distance of but an hour's walk, many of

the inhabitants make the pilgrimage but once a year, or seldomer. They have their hands full, it seems. There are olive plantations and vineyards to be cultivated; wine and oil have to be made when the season comes. They also rear silkworms, and much weaving is done by the women of the village. We see them, as we pass, standing at their doors with a distaff, or sitting inside at their looms. Everywhere are little groups of picturesque children who beg as we pass. 'Beg' is a wrong word, however. Young Capri asks for alms in a tone of authority, with the air and grace of spoilt children, and, like them, is too apt thus to get its heart's desire. It is only fair to add that here beggary and idleness, usually supposed to be inseparable, do not go together. A more hard-working people than these islanders will not be found in a hurry.

As the traveller strolls on, aimlessly, between rows of strange white straggling houses, he will probably come upon a little inn, modestly styling itself 'Paradise.' Let him not be daunted by a name of proverbial ill-omen. *Paradiso* at Anacapri is clean, and thoroughly to be recommended, offering good fare and comfortable quarters to all whom such things may concern.

Sitting under the trellised vines in the garden, with its Eden-like produce, grapes, pears, figs, walnuts, *à piacere*, spread before us, we let the hours slip by unheeded, and grow forgetful of the outside world. The longer the stay, the more distasteful the return to the battle of life becomes. Some have declined it outright, and, once fallen under the charm of the place, have made it their home for good. The island is dotted with little villas, embowered in vines or orange-groves, and pointed out to the stranger as the residences of divers Eng-

lish, German, or Italian gentlemen who have thought fit to simplify their lives thus. Representatives of the nobility are not wanting, philosophers who came to the conclusion that in their case peace and simplicity were the requisites for the 'greatest happiness' after all. Nor, so far as we are aware, are they apt to repent.

Anacapri is said to have had a romantic origin. Long ago there lived in Capri a lover and his lass, whose parents opposed their union. Despairing of ever obtaining their consent, the young couple fled away to the wilds at the farthest end of the island, built themselves a dwelling-place, settled down, and there remained unmolested. The next pair of lovers whose parents refused to sanction their wishes followed suit, and their example was imitated by others, till, from these runaway matches, quite a little colony had been formed. The story is pretty, and nobody now can prove it untrue.

The walks from Anacapri are very numerous and very little known. Except the ascent of Monte Solaro they do not afford such fine views as can be had from the eastern side of the island. The heights here slope down more gently to the sea, which is, however, actually unapproachable, the hills ending at last in a sheer drop; there is never a bit of beach or a landing-place for boats among the rocky coves of Anacapri. But there are rambles and scrambles along narrow country lanes, full of wild flowers and brilliant butterflies, and a walk along the cliffs overhanging the sea brings us to the fields of Damecuta, where beneath the soil of vineyards and vegetable gardens lie the remains of another imperial villa; fragments of its mosaic flooring—malachite, lapis lazuli, and other mar-

bles—lie shining oddly among the furrows.

Before leaving Anacapri we must mention the remarkable pavement in its principal church, of which the inhabitants are very proud. It is a representation in encaustic tiles of the garden of Eden or *Paradiso*, and no doubt is god-father to the inn mentioned above.

We said there was no work of art in Capri to claim attention. This 'Paradise pavement' is the exception to prove the rule. It is a composition of the seventeenth century, the quaintest possible representation of the subject. The figures of Adam and Eve, and the animal kingdom surrounding them, are conceived and executed with that strange mixture of perfect seriousness and grotesque humour which characterised mediæval artists, and that so sadly puzzles the consistent spirits of critics in modern times.

IV.

It is a provoking trait in Capri that the beautiful blue sea that hems you in on every side should be nearly everywhere unapproachable. Other rocky islands share this tiresome peculiarity. Those who are acquainted with Sark, the Capri of the north, an island presenting so many points of resemblance, as also of contrast, to its southern sister, cannot have forgotten how few and far between were the practicable descents to the shore, how steep and rough the scrambles to be undertaken, at the sore peril of the adventurer's apparel, not to say of his bones. But Capri is like a rocky fastness without a ground floor at all. Water, water everywhere, but only a bird's eye view allowed, from heights of five hundred feet and upwards.

As in Sark, there are two safe

landing-places, no more. But in Capri it is *only* at these two little harbours that the shore presents the semblance of a beach, and that there is a shore at all.

Of one, the *Marina Grande*, we have spoken already. The other lies on the opposite side of the island. From the Anacapri road a footpath leads down through vineyards at first, then over rough waste slopes, till, in about twenty minutes' time, we reach the *Piccolo Marina*, one of the most fascinating spots in Capri. It is a little cove sheltered by rocks projecting on either side, and facing the wide African sea. Some dozen fishermen's boats lie moored on the shore, but the mere scrap of beach does not admit of wanderings. It is a haunt to be recommended to the sea-dreamer, or where he might stay contentedly for hours, groping for shells and coral on the shingle, watching the rolling waves and the hollow rock and the magnificent coast-line, and the giddy heights of *Monte Solaro* above.

There are no dwelling-houses here, and the spot is so wild and desolate that the least sign of life is as startling as the footprint in the sand to Robinson Crusoe. Especially when humanity breaks in upon our reverie as follows: A strange-looking figure suddenly appears on the adjacent height. He has a bronzed face, is wild-clad, in the approved style of a Calabrian brigand. He is gesticulating violently, and shouting something unintelligible in hoarse and threatening tones. He seems to have started up out of the ground or some cave at least, and in answer to his invocation comes a mysterious howl from a comrade in a bush behind the rocks. Let not your melodramatic imagination tempt you into supposing you are in for an adventure. The Fr

Diavolo of the Piccola Marina is simply the owner of one of the fishing-boats yonder; and it is upon the extraordinary merits of this bright particular bark that he has been holding forth to you from above; also on his willingness to take you out in it to call on the neighbouring grottoes, laying stress on the fact that his charges are very low.

From the Piccola Marina there is a magnificent view of the remarkable outlying rocks called I Faraglioni; three huge cone-shaped masses, standing in a line, detached from the shore. They look well here from a distance, but should also be seen from the Punta Tragara, a headland immediately adjoining them, and easily reached from Capri by a path that deserves mention, if only on this account, that it is level all the way, and singular in this respect among our walks in the island. From the Punta Tragara we stare the Faraglioni, so to speak, in the face, and those who have any restless activity to work off may scramble down the steep height to the water's brink. But they will have gained nothing but the necessity of immediately scrambling up again. There is no shore, the cliff-side slanting down abruptly into the water as usual.

There is another wonderfully picturesque freak of Nature to be seen on the island, and far more striking than the Faraglioni. A huge jagged rock rising on the coast, and with an enormous cleft right through it. It is known to the Capriotes as the Arco Naturale, and is not particularly easy of approach, much persevering scrambling over a steep hill-side being necessary in order to reach the best point of view. There is no danger, however, of missing the way. The scenery lover will be fortunate if he gets off with no more than three guides, self-con-

stituted. Old men, women, and children at work in the vineyards readily desert their occupation, when once the tourist is espied, for the honour and glory of escorting him over what is really rather delicate ground, and for such profit of halfpence as he may think fit to reward their services withal.

Here in the ravine or Val di Mitromania, lying between the heights, is a large cave, interesting through the remains that have been discovered there, and which have given much scope to antiquarian fancy. It appears in Roman times to have been used as a temple for the worship of Mithras; the rostrum is still plainly discernible, and sculptures and inscriptions have been found to prove that such was its designation, though so gloomy a cavern seems as singularly inappropriate a place for the altar of the sun-god as could well be chosen.

V.

THE far-famed Blue Grotto of Capri lies under the cliffs about half an hour's distance by boat from the Marina Grande. Its beauty has been so often and so enthusiastically described that to heap on adjectives of admiration here would be to paint the lily. Instead, we would warn expectant strangers that the *grotta azzurra*, unless seen under exactly the right circumstances, is assuredly the 'grayest of things blue,' and that the circumstances are not to be had for the asking.

First the sea must be calm. This is a *sine quâ non*. If waves are stirring, they sweep over the mouth of the cave, and may not, in surging back, allow time for the boat to pass through the aperture. And here a word of caution to ardent grotto-hunters and bad

sailors. The boatmen on the Marina are apt to be over-sanguine as to the chances of getting in on a rough day. Trust them not. 'When in doubt, forbear,' is the rule we recommend to be guided by. For if you submit to take your chance you risk having to lie flat, passive, helpless in your boat for some twenty minutes, seesawing before the opening of the cave through which your boatmen are vainly trying to steer. Instead, the little craft is bumped against the rocks and soused with spray every moment, the traitors luring you on into patience by holding out false hopes that the next wave, or the next, must waft you in. Nothing of the sort. Like the Peri before Paradise, there you hover. No admittance to-day.

Then, besides a calm sea, there must be a clear sky and the sun must be high up in it, else the hues will be too faint. Moreover, it is desirable that no rain should have fallen for several days beforehand, else the water grows turbid, and the effect of the refraction is not what it should be or what one has been told to expect. A visit to the Blue Grotto under perfectly favourable conditions will probably disappoint no one; and in any case there is beauty enough to admire in this marine crypt, with its vaulted roof, dark hollowy recesses, dim religious light, and everywhere this mysterious shade of crystalline blue, vivid at the opening, and here and there on the walls where the light flashes, paler in the shadowy corners—a symphony in blue that might puzzle even a 'Harmonist' of to-day to take down on canvas.

The tour round the island in a boat, which can be made in about three hours, is an ideal water-excursion, and the only way of acquainting ourselves with the secrets of the coast-scenery. From

the Blue Grotto we glide on, to the heights of Damecuta. Anacapri—there are no dangerous currents and eddies, the boat steers within arm's length of the cliffs in perfect safety—we reach the western headlands, pass under the shadow of the Monte Solaro, and when, the circuit half round, we approach the Piccola Marina more grottoes invite attention. There is first the Green Grotto, a fissure in the rocks, through which the boat passes as under the arch of a bridge. Though not a gem at all, none the less is it a 'Grotto of beauty,' the vivid green reflections on the rocks are of dazzling brilliancy. The Red Grotto, which owes its colour to the madre growing on the rocks, and the White Grotto, next in order are these curiosities, are fine caves enough, but none of these have the peculiar inaccessibility of the Blue Grotto, which adds not a little, we believe, to the charm of the latter.

Passing the Faraglioni we reach the Salto di Tiberio, as grisly a spot from below as above; we round Lo Capo, the heights of San Michele only too soon find our way again at the Marina Grande to the end of our circular tour.

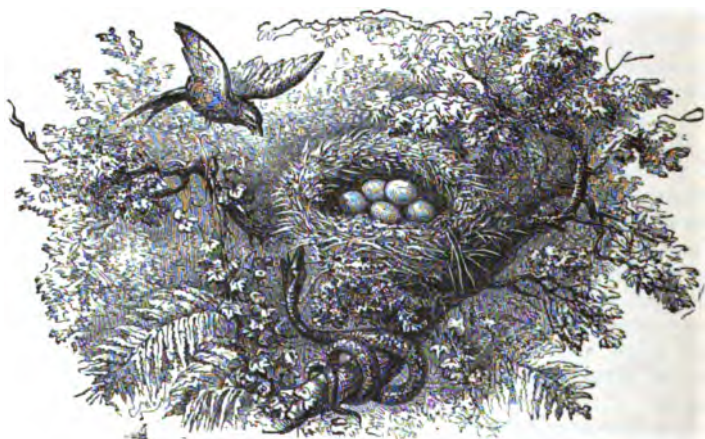
VI.

GUIDE-BOOKS discourage the traveller from making the ascent of Monte Solaro, assuring him it affords no view that may not be obtained elsewhere without climbing so high. But in this the books do err. Even Murra, Homer, may now and then be napping. For instance, it is from the slopes of Monte Solaro that any view of Anacapri can be obtained at all, and very

the little white settlement looks from above, with her rambling houses and luxuriant gardens, and cemetery thickly over-shadowed with laurels and cypresses. Mounting on, we reach a grassy ridge, as it were an isthmus between two heights that shut out the land east and west from sight, but whence we look down on two seas—the Bay of Naples on the north, and on the south the broader expanse of waters stretching away to the far horizon. Farther on we reach a hermitage somewhat more pretentious than that on the eastern promontory, and where dwells a second and rival hermit. Padre Anselmo is hospitality itself, and invites the thirsty wayfarer to come in, partake of his wine, rest, and look at the view from his balcony. From the hermitage there is yet a twenty minutes' scramble to be made to the summit itself, a mountain soli-

tude, where only the bees will keep you company as you sit on a bed of wild-thyme, and own, in spite of what guide-books say to the contrary, that the view is incomparable. The panorama includes everything—Capri and Anacapri, the Salerno bay and its islands, the Sorrento coast-line, Naples and *its* islands—Ischia, Procida, Nisida—we can even see across the latter, to the Bay of Terracina beyond.

We have not attempted more than a slight sketch of the manifold beauties of Capri. Those who will take the trouble to make their intimate acquaintance need not fear disappointment. She is the real and existing Island of the Sirens, lures the passing traveller to her shore, binds him with her spells, and keeps him in a sweet captivity, from which he soon loses the slightest desire for escape.



THE ENGLISH SYSTEM OF EXCURSIONS.



LOOKING at our English system of excursions we see a great fact, and, moreover, a fact which every year increases in dimensions. For six months in the year it modifies, more or less, the action of our railways. It is rapidly becoming a fixed element in the habits and ways of living and thinking of our people. We know that the Scotchman is never at home unless he is abroad, and now the thirst for locomotion is becoming a national passion. The sentiment is extending, both laterally and vertically, among all classes of society. We take our pleasures sadly, as Froissart said; but still we take them,

and we take them in this way. It may be an excursion only for a few miles, to the next town, for a flower-show, a fancy-fair, an oratorio, or a concert; or we may book places for an expedition round the compass of the world; or, if ever the fairy tales of science may be realised, we may show a cheerful alacrity in being landed, *vid* projectiles, on the surface of the moon. In looking at the excursion system there are two things which ought always to be borne in mind (for which, indeed, the excursion system may be said to exist), cheapness and society; and these can only be secured by a combination of human beings. One or the other may be the predominant motive in the mind of many; for the most part there is an alliance of the two. One great advantage of the excursion is that people are thrown together. They are thrown together still more if the excursion is a prolonged one—to Palestine, to Rome, or even to Paris. There are many persons to whom a first-class excursion is a kind of *entrée* into society. There are many persons also to whom it is a great thing to know with absolute certitude what the bill will be, and to calculate their expenses beforehand. This is an especial comfort when going abroad. They don't object to paying money, but they object to be cheated—an indomitable prejudice of the British mind; and in a strange country, and speaking a strange language imperfectly, they are constantly liable to have their ignorance made a market of. Then again it is well to avoid the chronic irritation of having your hands constantly in your pocket. In fact the excursion system is an extension of the great modern principle of coöperation. People used to say that competition was the great secret of modern life. Don't believe it, candid reader. Coöperation, and not competition, is the mainspring of success and happiness. We get on ever so much better by helping, instead of

opposing, one another. Some of the greatest advances in modern business have been made in abbreviating laborious processes on the principle of coöperation. Thoroughly to carry out the idea of excursions this benignant principle should be exemplified by the brotherhoods and sisterhoods of happy summer excursionists. A celebrated novelist wrote a rather impudent paper, comparing Cooke's excursionists abroad to convicts allowed to land in a strange country for a day or two. I have met with unfavourable specimens of excursionists, people who, when allowed to visit the great places of great men, have filched flowers from the garden, and trinkets from the drawing-room, and have defaced objects by carving their intensely uninteresting and unsightly initials; but we hardly touch on such hordes in these pages, and confine ourselves to folk of gentle manners and sweet temper, as all good excursionists ought to be.

Let us begin at the beginning with the 'grand tour' beyond all others, an excursion round the world. The days may come when people will think as little of going round the world as of going round the Isle of Wight. For an excursion on the largest possible scale this may be confidently recommended. A voyage round the world was in the old times an unparalleled achievement. It was only a Captain Cook or a Lord Anson who could do so once in a way. In these days a great many people go round the world, and from time to time they publish their travels—Mr. Darwin, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Carlisle, Mrs. Brassey, and others. By and by the achievement will be so common that it will hardly be worth while to write a book about it, and indeed many more people make the journey than ever write about it.

The grandest way of all to make the excursion is in a yacht of one's own, inviting your friends to join you. This excursion, like all others, is best made when a party of friends combine together for the purpose. Most travellers, however, go out as passengers in the different lines of steamers. There was a scheme some time ago of a number of people doing the voyage in a screw-steamer of their own on the true excursion system of combination. We are afraid that this particular excursion scheme fell to the ground; but it is a plan that will certainly be taken up some day and carried to completion. In the mean time the regular excursion offices will book any one for a journey round the world.

How luxuriously an excursion may be made round the world, Mrs. Brassey, the wife of the member for Hastings, has recently told us. They had governess, children, lady's maid, a friend or two, and an excellent crew. It is hardly necessary to say the ship was pretty well loaded to the Plimsoll line with the good things of this life. It was a most delicious voyage. It was not without incidents. They fell in with a derelict wreck, which was a floating cellar of wine. They rescued the crew of a ship afire, and their own vessel caught fire. An 'incident' is always valuable on an excursion, but an incident of this kind might be spared. The imagination is chiefly excited by the luxurious regions of the islands of the Pacific, such as they have been described by Lord Pembroke and Dr. Peter Kingsley. We would really advise people—leisure people, people who have plenty of time, which is really of more importance than plenty of money—to get up an excursion for the South-Sea Islands. There are the groves and the coral strand and the frequent shadowed streams.

Mrs. Brassey describes some of the native luxuries. 'There were oysters, lobsters, wurruli, and crawfish, stewed chicken, boiled sucking-pig, plantains, bread-fruit, melons, bananas, oranges, and strawberries.' 'A very pretty picture of a lunch,' as Sam Weller said. The cocoa-nut will hold two or three pints of a cool sweet liquor, such as we do not know in England. Even the tinned articles are very much better than at home. The still sea brims the living turf, and the nearer waters are overshadowed by the magnolia and the hibiscus. It is impossible to exaggerate the beauty and verdure of the trees, nor yet of the submarine coral-forest. We feel very much inclined to get up an excursion and make life a prolonged picnic at Tahiti. Lord Pembroke declares that the fair savagesses 'wank winks which ought not to have been wunk,' but on this point Mrs. Brassey is silent. It is to be observed that different travellers round the world go with various aims. Mr. Darwin of course had a scientific aim. Sir Charles Dilke had a political aim. Most people aim at health and cheapness. It is possible that a voyage of this sort may be done in ninety days. The Brasseys took eleven months. It might really be done in perfection in eleven years, and the eleven years would be well spent.

There is a particular kind of excursion which is coming into great favour of late years. These are the excursions which are made by all the great societies which hold their meetings in the autumn. The British Association leads the way, and the Archæological and the Social Science and the Church Congress follow afterwards. But however diverse their objects, they all have abundant eating and drinking together, and combine for friendly excursions. Many of these

excursions are to great houses, where they will be welcomed with profuse hospitality. Many of these excursionists, indeed, will find themselves in better company than they have been in in their lives before. They will feast in baronial halls and episcopal refectories. The London papers tell us all about the festive proceedings of these august societies. What, however, has not been equally noticed is the rapid diffusion of similar societies on a reduced scale—scientifically for the promotion of science, and socially for the promotion of excursions. These last are called field-days, and often constitute very jolly excursions.

The town of Great Pedlington, or, for the matter of that, the village of Little Pedlington, has its Naturalists' Club or its Scientific Association. In the summer it is resolved that they will have a field-day, or two or three field-days. They go to an abbey or castle, or splendid rocks of puzzling geological construction, and the professed aim is to listen to a lecture by some celebrated philosopher, and increase the sum-total of the scientific knowledge in the world. Then the lunch comes, the commissariat element having a conceded rivalry with the scientific. This kind of expedition is frequently done entirely by coach and carriage, and excursions without railways or excursions beyond railways are peculiarly delightful. The real fun of the excursion begins when the lunch has been discussed and the scientific element eliminated. Then come the dance, the song, the ramble, the picnic-tea in the woods. In some excursions which I have known, the travelling has taken up nearly all the day, and you have no sooner arrived than you have to depart; but on this kind of excursion the travelling is happily minimised. In some large leisurely

places there are regular walking clubs, the members of which once a week make a long expedition into the country, and, making a moderate lunch, get back in time for dinner. Every visitor cannot do better than make an excursionist of himself once a week, in order to maintain the equilibrium between boon nature and our artificial life.

We ought especially to notice the system of excursions as it appears on some day of St. Lubbock, which of course has various varieties and sub-varieties. The English excursionist is frequently a much-enduring creature. Has the reader ever made an excursion to Margate on a Whit-Monday? If not, life has one more experience, one more emotion, to offer. I have paid my 'school wages' for such an experience, and I register a mental vow that, however ardent may be my investigation of the ways of my fellow-creatures, those investigations shall not be carried on in a metropolitan excursion train on a Bank-holiday.

Far away in the provinces matters are often much better. Among my happy days—they are perhaps only a few more than the eleven which the caliph reckoned up—I count an excursion to Malvern and one to Tenby. I rather think that at Malvern the excursion was of a very approved type; that is, we had a sufficient party among ourselves to have excursion tickets allowed us by the company. The mountains and the sea are the great renovators of jaded nerves; the splendour and the purity of the sea and atmosphere seem to confer fresh energy and courage. The Tenby people did not at all appear to regard our raid upon them with eyes of admiration. They drew down their blinds and shut their gates, and manifested other signs of contempt and abhorrence for us. The old Duke of

Devonshire was delighted when crowds came to see Chatsworth, and he would watch them from the library - windows. But the residents in watering-places speak of excursionists as a highly-intelligent Roman patrician might speak of the Goths and Huns issuing from the vast Hercynian forest to invade them. I suppose we pretty well ate and drank the place entirely up. And then we had to leave it when the twin bays were oily colour and sunset-flushed, and a deep calm again brooded over the little town when its noisy visitants had departed.

One kind of excursions of which I feel inclined to speak very favourably are those railway excursions which take you to remote parts of our own country—to Devon or Cornwall, Derbyshire or the Lakes, Scotland or Ireland. The distance is considerable, and the tickets are good for several weeks, or, by some extra payment, for several months. You either get a lot of coupons for a circular tour, which is the livelier and more expensive way, or you at once travel down to some delicious remote spot, where you get perfect quiet, and what philosophers call 'a conservation of energy.' Differing from our metropolitan experience, the best plan is to go first class. As you are going a long journey—a journey which will last 'from morn to dewy eve'—it will be very advisable that you should travel down with really nice people. This last point will depend on your tact and presence of mind and powers of judgment and appreciation. I imagine that a good many romances of the rail are connected with these railway journeys. I am past that sort of thing myself, and, in fact, had never any of it worth signifying. Still there is a great deal of it to be observed as one goes about in the world. It is

not unusual, for instance, to observe young married people, who have had the ceremony performed very early, and have stolen off by the morning train. The bride is generally detected by her supernatural efforts to look extremely matronly. Once a gentleman volunteered the information that he had got 'tied up that morning.' Married lovers are, however, selfish and unsocial, and had better be consigned to a *coupé*. The officious guards, intent on tips, are always prepared to deal with such a contingency. One day I overheard a little dialogue. 'All right, sir; I've given you a *coupé* all to yourselves,' says the guard to a gentleman with a bright pretty lady on his arm. 'Bless my soul,' was the answer, 'I am long past that; been married for years.' Retired into my own shell, I look on with benevolent eyes as I watch the sturdy Britons relaxing their natural inclination to regard strangers as members of the swell mob, and making sturdy elephantine overtures towards good fellowship. Happily the young people have a little more 'light' and 'sweetness' than the preceding generation, and a greater capacity both for the commencement and cementing of friendship. Ah, let them use that gracious privilege wisely and kindly! The time comes when the social joints are stiff, and we would rather not be introduced to a stranger than otherwise.

Now if you have those circular tourist tickets, you are again and again meeting the same people. You sit opposite to them in hotels, and you find yourself on the same boat

on the lake, and you meet them in climbing Snowdon and Ben Lomond. It may be put down as an important fact in sociology, well worthy of the attention of Mr. Herbert Spencer, that in these holiday seasons the disposition of paterfamilias grows soft and open as summer, and in a few days he will go as far with a stranger as he has done in many years with his neighbour who lives on the other side of the street at home. No doubt the community of interest and the unwonted familiarity thaw the ice, and make welcome the mutual approaches.

A great deal is also to be said when you make friends with people in a railway-carriage, and find that you and they are to be domesticated for some weeks in the same place. You do not see your neighbours so often, but you see them more intimately. You go into each other's temporary homes. The humble homes of the seaside often become very gorgeous homes in urban life. And then the long walks through lanes and meadows or along the cliffs, or the mornings spent on the beach in exploring the wonders of the natural aquaria, or taking a boat into deep sea-caverns, reveal the secrets of character and the tastes and tendencies of life. As you grow old and sit with your host at the ingle-side, and talk becomes affectionate and free, you will now and then hear how he and his good wife came together when a blissful excursion from London threw them into companionship amid glorious scenes which awoke for them the enthusiasm of Nature, and evoked the poetry of life.

A RAMBLE IN UNTERWALDEN, SWITZERLAND.

'On as we move, a softer prospect opes,
Calm huts and lawns between, and sylvan slopes ;
While mists, suspended on th' expiring gale,
Moveless o'erhang the deep secluded vale ;
The beams of evening, slipping soft between,
Light up of tranquil joy a sober scene ;
Winding its dark-green wood and emerald glade,
The still vale lengthens underneath the shade ;
While in soft gloom the scattering bowers recede,
Green dewy lights adorn the freshened mead,
On the low brown-wood huts delighted sleep
Along the brightened gloom reposing deep.'

WORDSWORTH.



CENERY, however beautiful, and colouring of sky, sea, mountain, and valley, however lovely, are powerless to put the traveller at his ease or make him feel at home, unless he has, or sees some prospect of having before nightfall, a roof of some sort over his head, be it leafy arbour, tent, or log-hut ; and he cares for it not only or chiefly as a protection against the weather, against the biting cold and the scorching sun, but still more for the comfortable feeling of safety and seclusion—in fact, for all that is comprehended in the delightful word 'home.' And the more we find in any land to satisfy this natural craving, the more its habitations seem to correspond with our ideal of 'home ;' the nearer they approach to the poetry of peace and repose, so much the more comfortable we feel, and so much the more hospitable does the country, wherever it be, seem to us.

To the traveller, houses are like so many familiar faces peeping out at him from among the green trees or the dark rocks, and the windows are like kindly twinkling eyes, and when he sees them he at once feels reassured and, in a word, 'at home.' This is especially the case in Switzerland. Wood, perhaps, is in itself a more genial, more sociable, and more homely material than stone ; and it certainly is so when treated as the Swiss treat it, when it becomes embrowned with age and is turned to account in all sorts of beautiful carvings and ornaments, and, above all, when it has the advantage of such a setting as the Swiss landscape. Swiss houses and Swiss landscapes naturally and inseparably belong one to the other. If a restless modern town house were set up face to face with the mountains, it would look like a fashionable Parisian bonnet on the head of a shepherdess ; and a Swiss cottage would look simply ridiculous if it were brought down into the plains,



PEASANT OF UNTERWALDEN, IN HOLIDAY DRESS.

and planted, perhaps, near the railway station of some town, or opposite a great mill or factory. The Swiss house and its landscape have grown together; or, rather, the former has grown out of the latter as truly as if it were an Al-

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pine flower. It is not only a feature in the landscape, it is an integral part of it.

The Swiss chalet is to architecture what the popular ballad is to literature, and nowhere do its homely tones ring more true

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than here in this little canton of forest and meadow, water and green slopes. As we wander through a long summer day from Sarnen to Stanz, past Wolfenschiessen, Altsellen, and Grafenort, to Engelberg, the various emotions of our soul might well clothe themselves in words and take shape in song; but nothing would be appropriate here but the simple Volkslied, and modern lips are far too conventional to sing it. None but a Hebel ought to venture to lift up his voice here by these waysides and beneath the shade of these orchards; he was the last to attempt these clear wild notes with any success.

Those who intend to explore the two parts called 'Ob dem Wald' and 'Nid dem Wald,' into which the canton of Unterwalden is divided by its primeval forest, must not expect any of the sharp contrasts which are to be met with in the regions of the High Alps, where benumbed glaciers and glowing Italian vegetation, life and death, are to be seen side by side and face to face. Here are no seas of ice coming suddenly down into blooming meadows, there is no Monte Rosa reflected in the silvery waters of a lake encircled by the luxurious garden of the Hesperides, and even the region of snow preserves a measure of the same mild and gentle character which prevails throughout the canton. Those, however, whose weary eyes are longing for the sight of green grass and foliage will here find an emerald carpet such as cannot be equalled anywhere, and avenues of beech-trees such as are hardly to be seen in the finest park in Europe. For the woods are the pride and beauty of the canton, and they cover what, in proportion to its size, are large districts, in some parts consisting of young vigorous saplings growing close together, and in others of

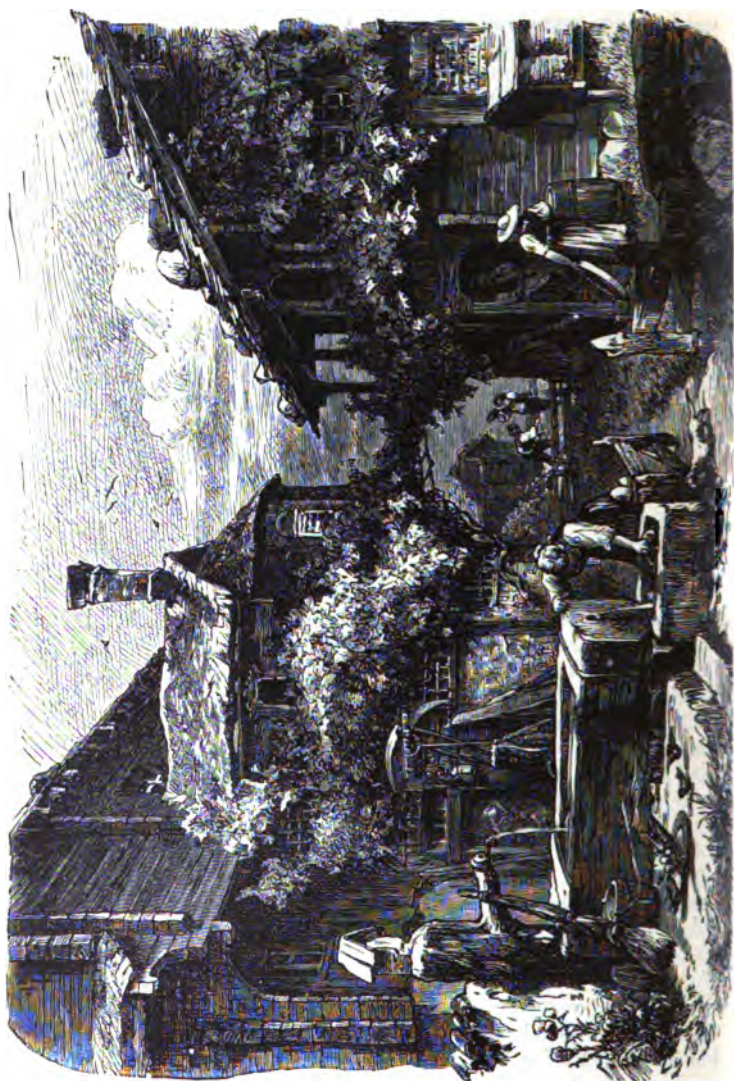
wild primeval forest with grand old trees of enormous size and age. And yet there are everywhere traces to be seen of a sort of patriarchal civilisation, which, seeing that it is restricted to the cultivation of fruit-trees and the tending of cattle, has naturally altered but little these many years past. As for town villas, factories, grand hotels, and *tables d'hôte* with their crowds of guests, there is not a trace of them; but in their stead there is a calm verdant landscape, lighted up by golden sunshine, and the cool wind from the lake breathes so softly over it, and the whole scene is so full of peace and harmony and virgin beauty, so still and quiet, that the traveller may well think he has found the poet's 'vale of rest.'

This is the sort of landscape which the German masters of the Middle Ages used to paint as backgrounds to their Madonnas and Holy Families, with an angel hovering in the sky with a lily in his hand, and an air of Sabbath calm, innocence, peace, and love pervading the whole. We must not allow ourselves to judge of a people by what we see as we pass along the road, and cast a glance now and then over the garden hedge at the roses, rosemary, sage, or red lychnis and lilies growing beneath the richly-laden fruit-trees, nor by what we see in the clean old houses with the antique furniture shining golden brown in the sunlight; neither must we judge from a passing conversation with a few old men and women, or the interchange of a few pleasant words with some of the young lads; but still, wherever we go, we cannot deny that the people exhibit much manly earnestness of character, much cheerful industry and calm staidness of mind, though combined, it must be confessed, with a certain hardness which rarely al-

lows them to indulge in festivity or gaiety of any kind.

Unterwalden's patron saint was a hermit and ascetic, no less a person than the celebrated Nicholas von der Flühe, and his effigy meets us wherever we go, being stuck up on either side of the road, on the houses, the chapels, and the church-doors. And if you look attentively at the faces of the old men as they stand before their cottage-doors, you will see a possible 'Brother Nicholas' in each one. They are all of the ascetic type; their foreheads are high, their faces long, narrow, and wrinkled; their eyes are set deep in their heads, and their skins are of the colour of brown leather. Those young fellows in the snow-white shirt-sleeves, who are walking behind yonder large party of sturdy-looking girls, will look just the same by the time they have homes of their own. They are quite right to keep an eye on the maidens, for these latter are very bright and fresh-looking; and, on the whole, their dress does not misbecome them, though it appears to be a bad copy of the Bernese costume, spoilt by the addition of bright trimmings and embroideries, and more especially by the height and shapelessness of the bodice. Still, amid the green monotony of trees and meadows, these bright colours afford a pleasant relief to the eye, particularly on holidays, when the village streets present a more animated appearance than usual. The Unterwalden fashion of dressing the hair is very peculiar, and though some people may rather like the effect of a double silver spoon thrust through the plaits at the back of the head, they can hardly go so far as to admire the narrow white ribbon which is drawn so tightly through the dark braids. However, this is how the great - great - grandmothers were

their hair, and their descendants are quite willing to follow their venerable examples. An extreme fidelity to the habits and traditions of the past is indeed an eminent characteristic of the whole canton; but Unterwalden's chief veneration is bestowed, not on any of the ancient heroes whose names figure in history, but upon the above-named 'Brother Nicholas,' who must have a few words now while we are at Sachseln, since we shall hear nothing but the name of Winkelried a little later on, when we reach Stanz. They were strange times in which Brother Nicholas lived; for the coat-of-mail oftentimes hung side by side with the cowl, and when a man had given up fighting and doffed the one, it was easy for him to don the other and turn hermit. And this is just what the 'Man of Sachseln' did: in his youth he wielded the sword, and in his old age he tolled the little bell of the hermitage. But it was not and is not true of him that a prophet is without honour in his own country, for he built his cell, or rather it was built for him, in the year 1468, close to his birthplace, where it may still be seen standing just a quarter of an hour's walk from the house in which he was born, and about three miles from the villages of Sachseln and Kerns. Many miracles were attributed to this saintly ascetic even in his lifetime; and he is said to have lived here for nineteen years without eating or drinking, his only food being 'the sacred Host. Albrecht von Bonstetten, who visited him in 1479, says of him: 'People say that at first he ate nothing but dried pears, beans, herbs, and roots, and drank the water of the brook which flows close by; until at last he refrained from all earthly food whatever.' The following old song describes his personal appearance with much



HAGUE.

of the incisiveness of an ancient woodcut:

'Look well at the figure of Brother Claus,
For handsome and tall of stature he was;
Though his powerful frame was wasted
so thin,

His bones you could see quite plain
through the skin.

His complexion was brown, his hair
raven black,

But now 'twas besprinkled with gray,
alack!

His beard was evenly parted in two,
And neither wide nor long it grew;
While in his fine dark eyes and face
There shone a light of celestial grace,
Which thrilled the beholder through
and through,

- So noble he looked, yet terrible too!

He is always thus represented in his effigies, which are so numerous they meet us at every turn, and the only wonder is that he does not figure in the arms of the canton, as Friedolin does in those of Glarus. Unterwalden, however, is represented by two keys, one for Obwalden and the other for Nidwalden. But Claus was a great *diplomat* as well as a saint; indeed, he has the credit of having preserved from ruin the edifice reared by Tell and the men of Rütli; and if the young men of the present day derive fresh courage from the contemplation of Winkelried's noble act, surely they will value unity more and more highly when they consider what was done by 'Brother Claus.'

Unterwalden is altogether a pastoral canton; and though the strong sturdy population may pick up a certain amount of silver in the extensive orchards which cover the valleys, their gold is earned much higher up, where the Alpine rose blossoms, and a standing army of some fifteen thousand cows is busy converting into milk the aromatic herbs and flowers with which the green slopes of the mountains are covered. The milk is made into cheese in the chalets, and annually forms an important item in the wealth of the canton.

All those meadows and pastures

which lie lower down, in the neighbourhood of the villages, and even the very houses themselves, are to be considered as nothing more than passing halting-places or winter quarters; the real life of the people does not begin until they reach the fragrant Alpine pastures high up among the mountains. These 'Alps,' as they are called, belong not to individuals, but to parishes, and, according to one of the most ancient statutes in the public register, the former merely have a right to make use of them for their cattle. A certain order and rotation are observed in the way in which these pastures are used, which have not been varied for many hundred years. As early in the season as may be, which is often soon after the assembly of the canton on the last Sunday in April, the cattle are taken up to the 'May pasture-grounds,' which are just beginning to grow green. In June these are deserted, and nothing is to be seen upon them but empty huts, for the herdsman and his cattle have gone higher up; and if we want to see them in July we must go up to the highest Alps, or 'Wildi,' as they are called, where they remain until bad weather or snow drives them down, which usually happens about the end of September. Even then, however, they retreat gradually stage by stage, and not until they are actually compelled to do so; for life in the valley possesses few charms for the genuine Alpine herdsman, though, according to our ideas of comfort, he leads the life of a dog when he is up among the mountains. For food and drink he has nothing but the well-known 'suif' and a kind of whey, bread and meat being dainties which rarely if ever grace his board, even on festivals. Tourists and visitors, indeed, who go a little way up the mountains just for

amusement, are fed with such luxuries as constitute the nectar and ambrosia of the Alpine Olympus and its pastoral divinities; but the herdsmen never taste them, or if they do, it is on some high festival when their wives and daughters come up from the village to pay them a visit, and there is a grand merry-making. And yet, all privations notwithstanding, they like their ordinary daily life, and enjoy the light and freedom and the fresh invigorating air. This life it is which has given such a peculiar and indelible stamp to their character, and has filled them with a love for their little fatherland which will endure as long as the Alps themselves.

To show how tenaciously the herdsmen of Unterwalden cling to the customs of their forefathers, we may mention that the ancient practice of invoking a blessing on the pastures is still kept up among them. Every evening at sunset one of the cowherds takes up a large wooden milk-funnel, and, using it as a speaking-trumpet, pours forth in a clear ringing voice a solemn appeal for the protection of the cattle and their keepers:

'Praise, all praise!
May God and St. Wendel,
St. Martin, St. Blasii,
And blessed Brother Claus,
Keep us all in safety
Upon the Alp this night,' &c.

Some of the verses of the hymn resemble a beautiful old Volkslied; and others, such as the following petitions to St. Peter, remind one of the times when dragons, griffins, lynxes, and wolves lurked in the neighbourhood of the flocks and herds, and did them all manner of mischief:

'St. Peter, hold the keys fast in thy right hand,
And save us from the bear as he prowls;
From the teeth of the wolf,
From the claws of the lynx,
From the raven's cruel bill,
From the dragon's dreadful tail,' &c.

But there are other customs as ancient as these, notably those observed at the cowherds' 'Festival of the Golden Threshold,' which is kept every year when the herds return to the valley, and enter upon their long dreary winter captivity. There are, properly speaking, three festivals, or *Kilbi*, as they are called: the 'Church Kilbi,' the 'Riflemen's Kilbi,' and the 'Cowherds' Kilbi,' the latter being the grandest of them all. At each of them, however, the chief luxury is what goes by the name of *Kilbespeise*, a dish whose principal ingredients are butter and whey. At Stanz people even used to go so far as to present a plateful of it to the statue of the old hero Arnold von Winkelried.

Dancing comes next in importance to eating, and was formerly carried on in very primitive ball-rooms, which were built of boards, and just put up for the occasion; nor was the music much better than the accommodation, a drum and pipe being the only instruments. All this, however, has been a little improved of late years.

But the merriest festival of the three is, as it always has been, the 'Cowherds' Kilbi,' which is, in fact, a sort of welcome to the herdsmen on their return to their homes, and begins with a service held in the church, at which those who are the heroes of the day take precedence of every one else. Then follows a gay procession, the most prominent feature of which is the sacred banner of the Alpine cowherds, adorned with a picture of St. Wendel, and waved with much effect by the strong arms of some of the young men. Conspicuous at the head of the procession march two of the herdsmen, called *Wildlütli*, 'wild men'—strange-looking figures disguised as gnomes, who carry young fir-trees in their hands, and play all sorts of tricks, to the

fearful delight of the eager curious children. There is no doubt that these figures are of extremely ancient origin; but there is some uncertainty as to whom they are intended to represent. Some say they are meant for the aborigines of Switzerland, who were driven away by the ancestors of the present population; while others maintain that they represent the friendly little gnomes or kobolds who are so familiar to the herdsman, and about whom so many tales are told throughout the region of the Alps. A merry day is succeeded by a still more merry night; for the herdsman, like the sailor just returned home from a long weary voyage, indulges at such times in the most riotous jollifications, and the custom dates from such very ancient times that an 'Unterwalden night' has long since passed into a proverbial expression. An 'Unterwalden night,' then, is a night of frantic extravagant merrymaking, in which singing, dancing, drinking, and card-playing all have their share; nor will any one who has once taken part in the revel ever be likely to forget the meaning of the term.

But, indeed, many of the popular habits and customs are extremely singular; and as for the dialect, it contains hidden treasures without end. Some of these days, no doubt, Unterwalden's peculiarities will all be shorn away; she will be brought to the same level with her neighbours, and the sweet spirits of the elements will be stifled in black smoke proceeding from the chimneys of factories; but at present the people cling to the ways of their forefathers, and sing with sturdy confidence such doggrel as the following:

⁴ Other countries may be whatever they will,

My little old land is the place for me!
And I will do as my forefathers did;

No change in the good old customs I'll see!

And, in truth, the stream of foreigners who have done more or less to corrupt all the rest of Switzerland have done no mischief here at present. Very little alteration, too, has been made in the inns in the course of the last fifty years; except, indeed, at Engelberg, where things have been entirely revolutionised. Some day, perhaps, it will become fashionable, and then there will be many changes. Meantime, there is no question about its beauty. What with the lake and the mountains, the different views which meet us at every turn are not merely lovely, but magnificent; and, whether we take up our stand upon Mount Pilatus, on the silvery throne of the Titlis, which towers above Engelberg, or on the summit of the Stanzerhorn or Buochserhorn—whichever way we look, the whole canton resembles a bouquet of flowers worn by some gay bridegroom. The canton of Unterwalden lies in the very heart and centre of the Confederation, and is bounded by the Lake of Lucerne and the cantons of Uri, Lucerne, and Berne. The lake forms its northern boundary from Beckenried to Hergiswil, from which place a chain of lakes and rivers leads directly to the Brünig Pass. The first link in this chain to the north is formed by the south-western bay of the Lake of Lucerne, called the Lake of Alpnach, which is connected with the Lake of Sarren by the Lungern-Aa, and is succeeded, a little farther up, by the Lake of Lungern. Another portion of the chain, the Lake of Gyswil, was let off into the Lake of Sarren a hundred years or so ago; but the chain, though broken by the Brünig, is continued on the other side of the pass by the lakes of Brienz and Thun.

To the right and left of this line of lakes lies Obwalden, the

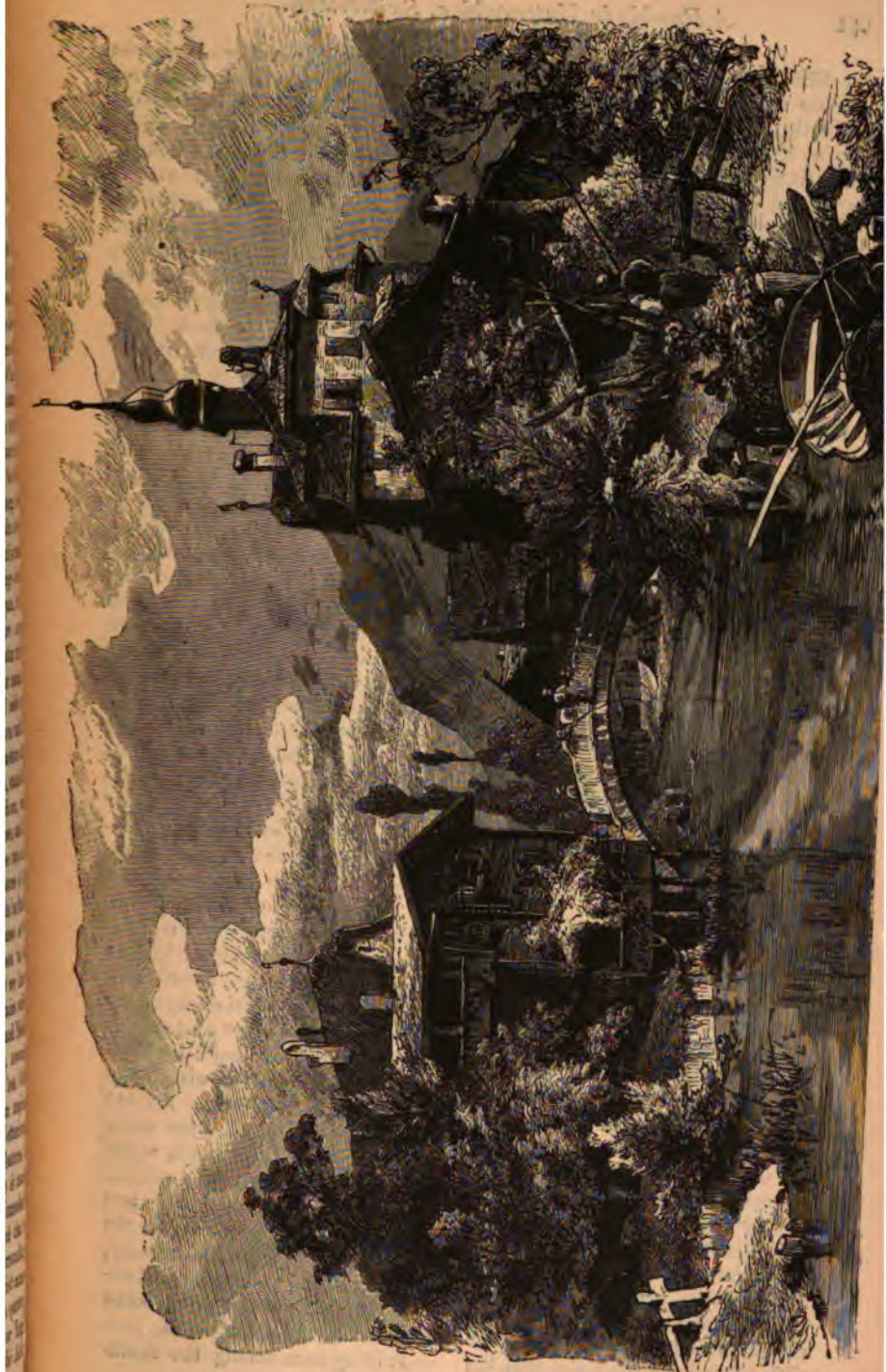
principal division of the canton of Unterwalden, containing the villages of Sarnen, Sachseln, Kerns, Alpnach, Gyswil, Lungern, and Engelberg. Stanz, Hergiswil, Oberdorf, Buochs, Beckenried, Wolfenschiessen, and Grafenort belong to Nidwalden, the other division of the canton. The Engelberg-Aa runs past the villages of Nidwalden, and the Lungern-Aa and Melch-Aa run through Obwalden, the latter stream giving its name to the well-known valley of Melchthal. Sarnen, which is situated at the confluence of the Aa and Melch, and is the capital of Obwalden, does not contain much to excite our admiration, unless we care to study the historical portraits in the Rathhaus; but it is a clean and extremely pleasant little place, and the surrounding country abounds in scenes of pastoral beauty.

As we stand beneath the spreading nut-trees we see a sheet of water flashing and sparkling in the sunshine: this is the Lake of Sarnen, which extends southwards between gently sloping banks for several miles, after which it is enclosed between walls of rock darkened by black shadow-like masses of fir-trees, above which rises the beautiful form of the Gyswiler block. A few of the snowy peaks belonging to the Bernese Oberland look down through the Brünig Pass, and at a little distance from the shores of the lake rise the Sachseln ridge and the slopes of the Schwändiberg.

Those who watch the population going quietly about their peaceful avocations, and hear the soft tones of the Angelus floating across the waters, are not likely to think of the wild storms which once swept this now peaceful-looking region. And yet the little hill yonder, on the other side of the Aa, might tell many a sad tale of suffering, for

there stood the castle of the cruel bailiff Landenberg, the tyrant of Obwalden; and we all know the dark story of Aerni Anderhalden. But this castle in time fell like the rest, and the assembly of the canton now meets year by year on the terrace which occupies its site; while a public shooting-gallery, where the present generation practise with greatly improved weapons, stands on the spot where the ancient halberds won their memorable victory. The eminence of Landenberg, as it is still called, commands a beautiful view of the country; but the prospect is yet more extensive and charming from the loftier height of the Ramersberg, where we may drink in the calm beauty of the scene to our heart's content. No gloomy threatening-looking mountains meet our gaze, for all the heights around are covered with verdure; even Pilatus tries to look less menacing than usual, and has clothed his rugged sides with forest-trees of various hue and tint. Opposite him, on the eastern shore of the Lake of Alpnach, stands the equally stately Stanzerhorn, which is also covered with trees, and the background between the two is occupied by the blue waters of the Lake of Lucerne; while in the far distance the broad mass of the Rigi appropriately closes in the prospect. To the east we have a view of the dark mountains which lie between Engelberg and Melchthal; and to the south, towering above the trees and less lofty mountains, rises in calm majesty the silvery head of the Wetterhorn.

Such are the chief features of the landscape; but there is much that is lovely in the immediate neighbourhood, and much that is sublime among the surrounding heights, so that the tourist cannot do better than take up his quarters either in the Krone or Engel Hotel at Stanz, or in the Adler



or Schlüssel at Sarnen, and from thence explore the environs. Besides the innumerable heights which are so irresistibly tempting to those who like climbing mountains, there are three quiet pastoral valleys, the Greater and Lesser Melchthal, and the extensive and beautiful Valley of Engelberg, which are also not without their attractions.

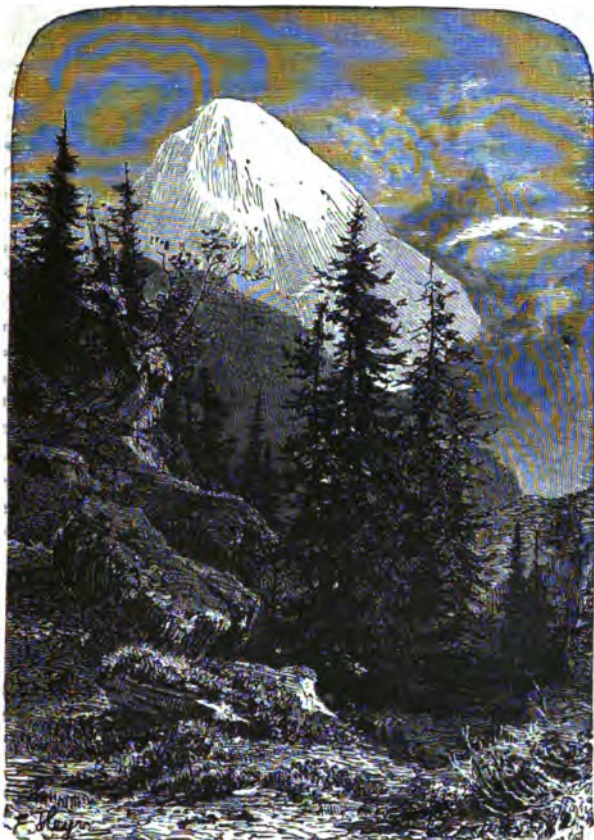
From Sarnen we may saunter along under the nut-trees to Sachseln, formerly called Saxula, or Steinen, a name still borne by the upper end of the village. Here stands the beautiful and famous church, whose interior is adorned by twenty-two pillars hewn from the black marble of the Valley of Melchthal. This is the Caaba of Unterwalden, for here in a glass case above the high altar repose the bones of 'Brother Claus,'—or rather they do not repose, inasmuch as the skeleton is placed in the attitude of devotion. A little farther on, at the entrance to the Valley of Melchthal, stands the chapel of the same saint, in the midst of a verdant landscape well diversified with wood and streams, and enlivened by numerous houses and cottages. The church of St. Nicholas is the oldest in the whole canton, and recalls the time when the Gospel was first preached to the uncivilised inhabitants of these mountains. Close by is a very ancient tower, which may not improbably have stood in one of the groves which the heathen Alemanni held sacred. Here, in former days, the people were gathered together in the open air to hear the preaching of the missionaries, and from this spot the Gospel-message made its way down into the valleys. The tiny village of Melchthal is nothing more than a small group of poor little houses, presided over by a church and surrounded by green meadows and precipitous wall-like cliffs. It is from this point that the

grand beauty of the valley begins to disclose itself; and here, as elsewhere, the landscape is composed of steep rocks, some eight thousand feet in height, interspersed with strips of green meadow-land, flowery meads, silvery purling streams, fragments of stone, and lovely woods of deciduous trees, as well as firs and pines. The valley is terminated by a precipitous stone wall called the Brändlistalden, from the foot of which the Melch-Aa rushes forth with as much impetuosity as if it were issuing from the keyhole of the portal which leads into the higher mountain-region. We shall look in vain for the lake which is its source, as it lies high up on an elevated plateau among the mountains. Melchthal, like Urnerboden, is a perfect Arcadia, a pastoral paradise, and looks as if it were specially intended for dancers, being splendidly carpeted with the greenest Alpine turf, and surrounded by a circle of noble mountains, among which we may reckon the Faulenberg, Hochstollen, Erregg, Gadenflüh, and Titlis.

Here, in the midst of an extensive plateau, lies the shining Lake of Melchsee, which is one of the most elevated in Switzerland. Around it are grouped several clusters of brown chalets, known as the Aa, Melchsee-Frutt, and Tannen, and the cattle everywhere find rich and abundant pasture.

The Melch-Aa is born in mysterious obscurity, deep within the heart of the mountain. At the southern end of the lake the water dashes down a dark shaft, which the herdsmen significantly call the 'Stäubloch,' or 'dusthole,' and immediately disappears within the mountain with a noise like thunder, nor is anything more seen of it until it reappears in the valley below as the milk-white Melch-Aa.

It is up here among the moun-



VIEW OF THE TITLIS, FROM PILATUS.

tains that life takes the shape which has such an intense charm for those who dwell in the lowland plains; here they can enjoy intimate communion with Nature, and earth and sky, scenery, air, and light, combine with the flowers and animals to form that 'other world' of which they have dreamt. Those who, in addition to enjoying all this, venture to climb one of the surrounding peaks, such as the Erregg or Hochstollen, will find —when they gaze upon the mountains of the Jungfrau range, the Silberhorn, Mönch, and Eiger, and then the Wetterhorn and Faulhorn with the two lakes lying between

—that their 'new world' is multiplied into several new worlds, and that they are looking upon a land of eternal beauty.

The primitiveness which is disappearing more and more from the Bernese Oberland may still be found here in full force. Yet there are a good many rocks, trees, and bushes here which have not yet been sketched, and a good many huts which have hitherto escaped the inspection of Curiosity with her sharp little nose, tight silk dress, and blue veil; there are whole tracts covered with the shining white edelweiss; and the cow-keepers, not being as yet over-

with tourists, are more disposed to be equable in the terms upon which they dispense their hospitality.

But of all the good gifts with which the highlands are endowed, surely water is the first and best. It is a joyous sight, as we ramble quietly among the mountains, to see it leaping and rushing over the rocks, and tempting us to indulge in plenteous draughts; and it may safely be asserted that where there is no water, there the landscape lacks life. But then it must also be remembered that our acquaintance is but with the gentle nymph, who toys lovingly with the flowers, whereas the mountaineer knows her as something of a fiend as well.

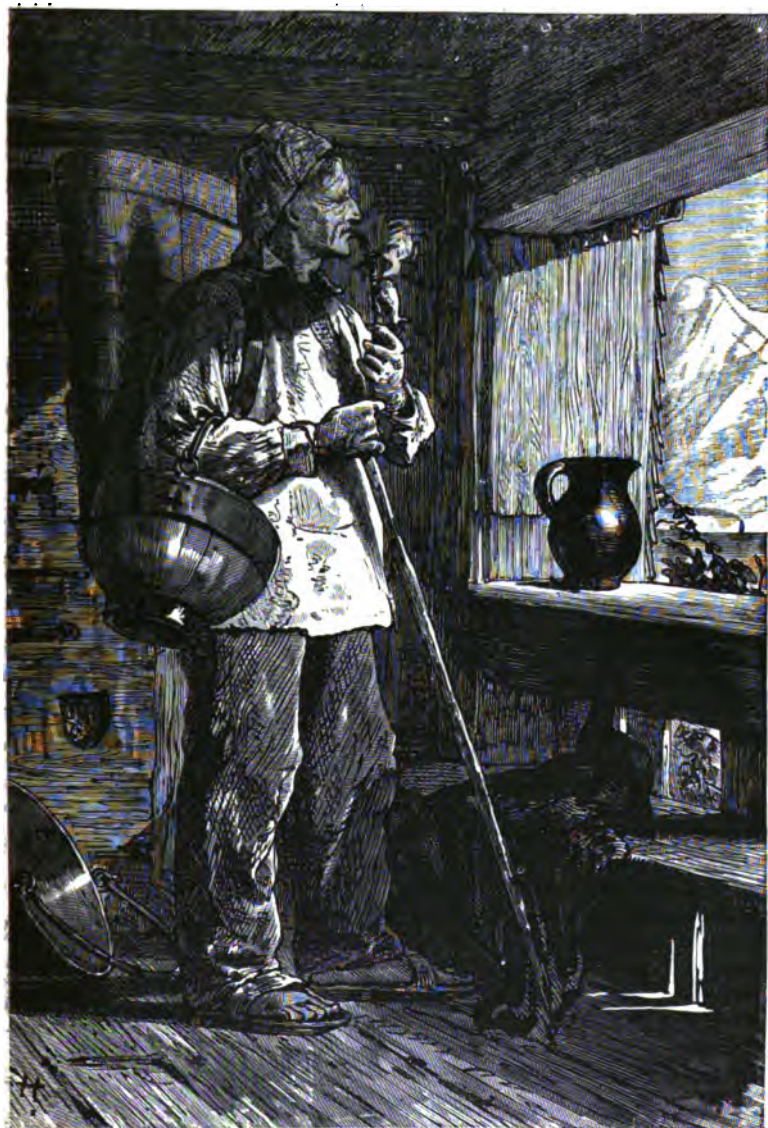
Look at the compact masses of gray mist which are gathering round the Gyswilerstock yonder and spreading over the valley. Some mischief must be brewing behind it, for large masses of white cloud with bright edges are being gradually piled higher and higher in the heavens, and the sky assumes a weird brimstone-like hue. The wind has not yet made up its mind from which quarter it shall blow, so at present it comes only in fitful gusts, before which the grass bends with a murmuring sigh, and the fir-trees in the valley bow their heads with much rustling. All the feathered inhabitants of the High Alps become suddenly silent and flee to a place of refuge, while the cattle exhibit signs of uneasiness. The sky becomes darker and darker, and the storm-lashed clouds flutter wildly round the mountains, whose bare white peaks gleam forth with strange and startling distinctness. Then comes a flash of lightning, which is followed first by profound silence, and then by a long roll of thunder; a second flash, and the first big drops of rain come splashing down upon the stones, and are quickly succeeded by a furious downpour.

The streams and torrents forthwith begin to shoot about in all directions, foaming and leaping like wild snakes in and out among the rocks and over the swimming grass. Here and there great fragments of rock are torn off and sent crashing down the slope; and meantime the roar of the water and the continuous roll of the thunder form an harmonious and fitting accompaniment to Nature's grand symphony. To these are sometimes added the scourging of the hail; and how violent this can be on occasion is proved by the present condition of what was once the large and beautiful fir-wood of the Schwändiberg, which was entirely stripped of its bark and almost killed by the blows of the hail during one particularly furious thunderstorm. For three days the sides of the mountains were white with the hailstones, which formed a regular sheet of ice.

Woe to the flocks and herds if they are not collected together and got as far as possible under shelter, for, in spite of all precautions, there is very rarely a storm without some accident happening both to man and beast. It is to ward off such misfortunes as these that the bells in all the churches and chapels are rung; their feeble voices reëcho imploringly through the darkness, and they often bear some such inscription as the following:

'On the devil I will avenge me,
And by God's help drive away storms
and bad weather.'

We who dwell in towns and hotels are often considerably put out by even a little rain, and at best it certainly does not add to our enjoyment of the scenery, while those who persist in proceeding in spite of it and wade on through the wet grass, with the dripping boughs flapping in their faces, are sure to come home with wet feet



A MILKMAN AT BUOCHS.

and a cold. Natives of the mountains know no such things, and by the look of their hard brown skins one sees that they have undergone a thorough seasoning. The men of old, who fought with dragons and braved a hundred hostile spears

at once, owed their strength and powers of endurance to their long-continued struggle with the elements.

We are now in Stanz, the capital of Nidwalden, and the birth-place of one of the most honoured

heroes of our youth—Arnold von Winkelried, whose ancestor slew the dragon. Those who love to dwell upon these memories may here do so to their hearts' content; for the reedy haunt of the dragon is still to be seen, and there is a statue of the knight at the fountain in the market-place. A much more worthy and beautiful memorial has, however, lately been erected to his memory by the whole Confederation, and, being the work of a Swiss sculptor, reflects double honour on the country.

Winkelried's house is pointed out in a meadow outside the town; it is an old stone building, but though sacred to tradition, its origin is somewhat fabulous, and is as doubtful a relic as Winkelried's shirt of mail, which is preserved in the arsenal of Stanz. But after all, what is the good of such tangible remembrances? Why should we cling to trash of this sort when Winkelried himself still lives in the people? Surely he came to life again in September 1798, when certain bands of French robbers made an attempt to found a Helvetic Republic at the point of the bayonet, and slaughtered the poor abandoned people of Unterwalden by thousands. The few hundred men who, for nine long hours, heroically opposed a French force ten times as large as their own were surely true sons of Winkelried, despite the fact that their heroism was of no avail, and that the valiant Frenchmen revenged themselves by slaughtering the defenceless women and children who had taken refuge in the church of Stanz, and by barbarously laying waste the whole country with fire and sword. In those days Nidwalden was reduced to a desert, and the marks of cannon-balls in the walls of the church and in the altar still remain to tell the tale of the bloody French massacre.

It is a very different scene which now meets our view, however. On Sundays there are crowds of people in the churchyard, all in their best clothes, and with a pretty little Sunday bouquet stuck in their hats or bodices; the numerous gardens are filled with blooming flowers; the air is rich with perfume, and the shady trees in the neighbourhood invite us to enjoy a pleasant ramble.

An hour's journey will take us to Hergiswil, Buochs, or Beckenried, all on the Lake of Lucerne; but before we reach Hergiswil, we have to pass through the lively little village of Stanzstad, which is in fact a suburb of Stanz, as well as the port of Nidwalden. It lies at the foot of the Bürgenstock, which, from whatever point of view one sees it, looks broad and precipitous. From Weggis and Vitznau, to which it presents its northern side, some six miles long, it looks like an enormous wall, while if we look at it from Pilatus, it appears as a rocky island rising out of the lake, which surrounds it on three sides. On the north it is steep and inhospitable, but on the south it is covered with numerous habitations. The ascent of the Bürgenstock is easy, and the view from its highest ridge, the Hammettschwand, is surprisingly beautiful. It is not more than a couple of thousand feet above the water, but you can see all the different divisions of the lake quite distinctly, and the mountains along its shores, the towns and villages on its banks and at the ends of its valleys all stand out most clearly; there is the Bay of Lucerne, the Lake of Küssnacht, the Lake of Sempach to the north-west, and on the opposite shore the beautifully situated villages of Weggis and Vitznau, and numerous villas and cottages. Such is the view of the lake itself, and in addition there are of course

the heads of innumerable mountains to be seen; but who would be the better or wiser if we were to give a list of their names? But we have still to see Rozloch, a cluster of houses at the foot of the mountain on the north-eastern shore of the Lake of Alpnach, and the famous ravine and water-course of the same name. The ravine is formed by the precipitously steep sides of the Plattiberg and Rozberg, on the latter of which once stood a castle occupied by a young noble named Von Wolfenschiessen, who was an underling of Landenberg's, and, though a native of Switzerland, was guilty of doing great injury to his fellow-countrymen. He fell beneath the axe of the valiant Conrad Baumgartner, and the castle was captured by stratagem on the New Year's night which is so memorable in Swiss history. Some considerable ruins mark the spot where once it stood.

There is also an extremely enjoyable excursion to be made to Buochs and Beckenried; and as we proceed on our way we are surrounded on all sides by life and merriment, by flashing waters, leaping fish, steamers laden with happy tourists, and pleasure-boats filled with well-dressed ladies, while a hundred tempting places are nodding and beckoning us in different directions. In fact, we here begin to fall in with one edge of the great stream of tourists, who generally make some stay in the neighbourhood; for, after a long sojourn among cows and cowkeepers, it is rather a pleasant change to watch the fashionable ladies who disport themselves nymph-like on the shores of the lake in the most faultless toilets; neither is a well-appointed table a thing to be despised under the circumstances.

But the precious moments are flying fast, and we have yet to make our last expedition, which is

to be to the Valley of Engelberg. Many a countenance lights up at the mere mention of the name, for it brings before the mind's eye a long series of calm happy summer days. In spite of its complete isolation from the world, this modest-looking and yet sublime spot has many a faithful old friend and admirer. Whether it be the freshness of the Alpine air, the grandeur of the mountains, or the brilliant verdure of the valley, there is certainly something exhilarating in the place, whatever it be; let us toss our caps in the air and give three cheers for the valley and mountains of Engelberg!

More than seven centuries ago a young lord, named Conrad von Seldenbüren, had a great desire to benefit his little estate of Nidwalden by giving it a convent. At first he looked for a site at Buochs, on the Lake of Lucerne, but that did not seem to suit him; he wanted something more retired. Then he pursued his search along the banks of the Surenen into the wild solitude overhung by the Titis, and when at length he reached the foot of the Hahnenberg he heard a choir of angels singing, which determined him to build on that very spot. As soon as the convent was ready he gave it the name of Engelberg, and himself became one of the lay brothers.

Those who travel along this road in the bright dewy freshness of early morning will pass through a flood of green and gold, formed by the meadows below and the wooded mountains above. Under the trees and on the green heights to right and left are a number of small brown cottages, whose bright windows flash from out the dark shade of the nut-trees, or are half hidden by the firs on the mountains. A pleasant race of men dwell about here, and those who associate with them will not only find them ready



THE CHASM OF ROZLOCH.

to enter into lively conversation, but will also notice that nearly all of them have their hearts and their heads in the right place. They are of course Roman Catholics, and their neat churches, clean chapels, processions, and images adorned with flowers, all seem to harmonise with the landscape.

Wolfenschiesen, too, has had its pious hermit—Brother Conrad Scheuber, a relation of St. Claus. The story of his life is to be seen depicted on the church-door in edifying but weather-beaten pictures; his dark wooden cell has been brought down from its solitude in the woods and planted by the roadside.

We pass through the forest and over heights, with the river foaming boisterously far below on our right, and with mountains soaring boldly into the clouds above; and so at last we reach the desired valley. It lies some three thousand feet above the sea, and yet the old mountain-giants around, chief among which is the proud Titlis, have lost nothing of their sublime grandeur. Mighty as they are, however, they bend kindly over the valley, and send down into it such joyous streams and cascades, that the beautiful meadows below quite resound with the song of the water-nymphs.

Standing in the midst of the valley we see that it is shut in on all sides, and feel, with a certain sense of delight, that we are quite cut off from the world. To right and left, before and behind—everywhere, in fact—we are confronted by towering walls.

First among them all is the Titlis, who only just fails of attaining a height of ten thousand feet.

He is encased in armour of shining ice, and attracts to himself many visitors every summer. His neighbours are the Grassen, Laubersgrat, Geissenspitz, Ruchenberg, Spannörter, and Uratzhörner; the Gadmenflüh, a serrated mountain-ridge, occupies the west, while the Blackenstock, Schlossberg, Uri-Rothstock, and Engelberg-Rothstock stand on the north of the valley. Excursions without number may be made from Engelberg, with the assistance of the various passes, of which there are many. Besides the Surenen Pass, there is one over the Grassen, leading to Wasen, in the canton of Uri; another, called the Joch Pass, leading into the Bernese Oberland; and two others, the Juchli and Storegg, which connect Engelberg with the valleys of Melchthal and Sarnen.

Those who do not care to wander far afield can join the large party of visitors who come merely for amusement, and find more to make life pleasant here than anywhere else. With them they may climb to the various Alpine pastures known as the Obhag, Fang, Wand, Furren, Zieblen, or Zingeln, &c., drink milk or goat's whey, and, if they be so disposed, may find plenty of botanical specimens among the rich flora of Engelberg in the course of their pleasant idle saunterings.

Were I to add any more, I should have to describe a memorable summer night which I myself once spent in the Valley of Engelberg, when meadows, streams, and mountains were all bathed in brightest moonlight. But I will say no more, lest I should become too romantic and fanciful.

MR. JORAM'S ENGAGEMENT.

A Farcical Story.

By what means I, John Joram, arrived at the conclusion that my system required tone it is needless to say. But having arrived at it I proceeded, like a careful and tolerably well-preserved bachelor, to consult the family doctor as to where I should seek the smiles of the goddess Hygeia. I have said I was a bachelor: let me add that although I had never entered the bonds of matrimony it was not for want of endeavours to win a wife, for I was constantly on the look-out for one, as I shall explain presently. But let me say first what the doctor ordered.

'Where shall I go?' I asked.

'Try Seaford,' he said.

'Thank you,' I replied, 'I will, if you will be kind enough to tell me where it is.'

He told me. Seaford is a tiny watering-place in Sussex, beyond Lewes, near Newhaven. It lies on the coast between the latter place and Eastbourne, and is as quiet and retired as any one could wish. 'There are no distractions: sea and shingle are all your joys, with delightfully fresh air, the glories of the downs, and last, but by no means the least, a plentiful supply of prawns. There is not much fishing—the mariners of the place seem to prefer hanging about the street-corners to encountering the dangers of the deep—but the wily lobster is to be had cheap, and that was enough for me.

I had not been settled more than a couple of days in comfortable lodgings in Pelham-place—Mrs. Jasper will remember the

elderly gentleman with the decidedly intellectual and slightly rubicund cast of countenance, who worried her life out about prawn curry—when I looked around me as usual for some one of the opposite sex to act as a ministering angel, in fact to become my wife.

My life, I must say, up to that time, had been spent in looking for ladies who would accept that position with regard to me; but as it was a condition of ministering to me that the offerer of wifely services should have money enough to keep me in affluence, I had not succeeded up to the time of which I write in obtaining the permanent attentions of an angel. At Seaford, however, I fell in with a lady who, I saw at once, would fill that position admirably, if only I could manage matters properly.

My ministering angel was not, at the first glance, what most people would call an angel at all. Her presence suggested no rustle of wings. She had no 'angel-like perfection'; in fact if you wanted to call up before you the image of Rebinah Toadwell, as she appeared to me in those days, you would have been most successful by thinking of the opposite of an angel.

She was not young. Some sixty summers had passed over that hyacinthine wig and retreating forehead, and had mellowed the gamboge glow of those hollow cheeks. One lustreless eye had been destined from childhood to gaze upon naught but the left side of a nose not wholly destitute of the hues

of sunset, while the other, which was of a different colour, flew wildly round in its socket whenever she looked at you, as if in terror at the approach of man. Her teeth were certainly beautiful—all that art could do had been done—and the result was a row of pearls on a patent setting 'all gold, warranted not to corrode or inconvenience the patient,' which might have inspired a poet. Her figure was so angular that rude boys used to offer to hang up their hats upon her when she took her walks abroad, and her mode of progression was not rendered more elegant from the fact that one leg was considerably shorter than the other. I pass over the facts that smallpox had left its ravages on her speaking countenance; that her education was hideously defective; and that she might, to put it mildly, have had a larger allowance of fingers on one hand without varying from the common herd; those are mere matters of detail. Suffice it to say that the above is a fair picture of Rebinah Toadwell when I first knew her, and that this Venus had fifty thousand pounds of her own, snugly invested in the funds of her native country.

That was what fitted her for the position of a ministering angel. Had I not ascertained, on the best possible authority, that she possessed such a sum in her own absolute right, and had the power of disposing of it as she chose, I should never have thought of promoting Rebinah Toadwell to the honourable position of ministering to my wants, and becoming Mrs. Joram.

You may ask how it was that I was so confident about Rebinah, when I have already said that I had been disappointed in other quarters. I can hardly say, but from the very first there seemed to

be some mystic tie between us. I could see the moment her wildly revolving eye lighted on me that she was stirred as deeply as a Christmas-pudding. I am not beautiful, although there are plainer men—nay, I have even been called ugly—my hair is scanty, and my features are Bardsolphian. So that it was not my personal appearance that did the trick—I am not vain enough to think that—but it was the art I possess of adapting myself to any society in which I may be thrown, or to any particular person in that society, that won me the heart of Rebinah Toadwell.

I have described Rebinah's personal appearance, and when I have endeavoured to faintly shadow forth to you her conversation, to image for you that mysterious entity she probably denominated with happy irony her mind, you will say I deserved to win and wear this extraordinary jewel.

Miss Toadwell's conversation, like the Falls of Niagara, was indeed a staggerer. There was and is and can be nothing like it on the face of this or any other planet. It smote on the unaccustomed ear like echoes from Colney Hatch, Hanwell, Bethlehem Hospital, and Banstead and Caterham Asylums, all shouted together through a telephone of weak intellect.

The fact was, Miss Toadwell in her youth had been very poor and received no education, or at all events only the most rudimentary knowledge, and she was moreover, to put it mildly, not an absolute genius at any time. At the age of fifty she had come into this enormous legacy, and then as much education had been given her as could be managed in a year or so, after which she turned restive and declined any more. But the Pierian spring had been too

strong for Rebinah, and seriously damaged her intellect. She had learned a vast number of words and phrases like a parrot, with only a vague idea of their meaning, and she proffered you a mixture of them under the impression that it was highly intellectual conversation.

This was the sort of thing—it occurred on my first introduction to her, and was certainly a little startling. I had just bowed, and remarked, after the manner of the majority of my intelligent countrymen, that it was a fine day. Rebinah's movable eye rolled convulsively, and in a mincing and affected manner, but perfectly seriously, she said,

'Yes, the circumambient weather is indeed mellifluously beautiful, and Sol darts his incandescent glances with ebullient ardour on the equinoctial sea.'

Remember that I didn't expect it, that I anticipated a mild and commonplace assent, and conceive my feelings when that sentence was hurled at my head, with the accompaniment of an eye that seemed to career like a circus-horse over the long words. I was staggered, but after a few moments I recovered myself, and murmured, 'I quite agree with you, ma'am; it's just as you say.'

She looked a little disappointed, I thought, and then the whirling of the eye warned me that she was going to begin again.

'I sought these Hyperborean shores in search of the acclimated fructification of a diurnal rejuvenescence. Can you tell me whether in such desquamative latitudes the paradoxical propinquity of the atrabilious zenith will produce a polygastric concatenation of the extravasated system?'

She said that clearly and slowly, as if she were asking the most commonplace question, but I saw

from her oscillating eye that she expected an answer.

Her companion, a sheep-dog of forbidding aspect, and a ghostly smile that savoured of strait-waist-coats, also looked at me as who should say, 'There's a facer for you; hadn't you better retire as other men have done, before you become quite mad yourself?' In that moment a thousand ideas flashed through my brain. I saw at once why it was Miss Toadwell had not married, though, as I have said, she was rich, and I guessed then what I found out afterwards to be true, that many of her suitors had retired in horror from such insane phraseology, while she was irritated at finding no one who could talk to her in what she imagined to be the pink of perfect conversation.

I came to a sudden resolution: that was, to answer this extraordinary woman, to reply to that saltatory eye, in the same fashion as the speech I had just heard. It might be a risk, but at all events I would try it; so I pulled myself together and recalled all the long words I could think of, and gazing tenderly at Rebinah, I replied,

'Ah, yes, I think I can answer you, Miss Toadwell—the effect is produced by the prophylactic cicuration of the oleaginous declivities.' She was delighted, and I could see the cyclonic eye curveting wildly with joy, so I went on: 'And thus you perceive that the cataplastic emulsion saves us from transcendental hypochondriasis.'

She was evidently charmed; the giddy-paced eye eddied round in rapture, and she responded gleefully, 'What joy it is to meet with a paregoric soul! It irrigates the mind, and my malformations feel foliated already.'

I felt that I must retire or ex-

plode; so I bowed and took my leave, being followed by a roll of the undulatory eye which nearly wobbled it out of her head. But as I went I felt I had conquered. I muttered Cæsar's three *v's* to myself as I strolled home, and over my solitary dinner I swore to myself that, if the dictionary did not fail me, Rebinah Toadwell's fifty thousand pounds should be mine.

My suit prospered, but it was the hardest work I ever underwent in my life. Imagine having to keep up conversations like that I have quoted, day after day, and you will wonder as I did that my brain did not give way under the strain upon it. I had regularly to cram for my interviews with Rebinah. I bought half a dozen dictionaries, one or two phrase-books, and works on medicine, and I read up long words assiduously, in order to keep pace with her. As to the Toadwell she was never at a loss. Her flow of conversation was equal to the rotatory movements of her gyrating eye, and that spun round till it made me quite nervous to think of it.

In order to aid my suit I called in the assistance of the Muse, and composed the following poem, which I shall ever regard as an example of what love can make a man do. Rebinah, I should say, had, as you might expect from her talk, a great *penchant* for Spelling Bees, and invariably attended any that were held, for they were then fashionable in the place.

For her then I wrote, and to her I dedicated, this

BEE BALLAD.

I.

You say that you can spell, sir; then be good enough to tell, sir,
How you spell me parallel, sir, synthesis, and semaphore;
And p'raps you'll try ecstatic and syncategorematic,
Homiletic and hepatic, with an extra dozen more.

Can you spell cryselephantine, periph and levantine,
Or the simple adamantine an polysyndeton?
Can you tackle anchylosis, can you anadiplosis,
Enthymeme, hypotiposis? If you're getting on.

II.

Such little words as grieving, gallim and deceiving,
Or there's really no believing what takes you sometimes see;
Pycnostyla, paroxysmal, caryatides, chrismal,
Words like these it's really dismal they're misspelt at a Bee.
So you'd better learn encitic—conquer analytic?—
With toreutic and mephitic, and thimim'ral pause;
And there's prestidigitation, homocachinnation,
O, it's quite an education to learn graphic laws.

III.

Some long words anatomic have that's rather comic,
And for verses palindromic words surely most absurd;
There's the shorter peroneus, and pharyngeus,
Sterno-cleido-mastoideus—could choose a simpler word?
Hydrostatic, iridescent, aromatic, cent,
Enigmatic, evanescent, those words, you see;
Manducation, macaronic, pergeoponic,
Arcuation, antiphonic—there's Spelling Bee!

That did the trick. She was enchanted, and went about the shore singing those stanzas to the top of her voice, until I began to fear for her reason. She had never read poetry like that, she said, and she persisted in calling me Shakespeare, and that there was nothing like a bard like them; and poor Rebinah was right.

At last I proposed. We were sitting on a rock in a sequestered place on the shore, and I put my arm round her lovely neck. It felt octagonal, and I shuddered at the angles—I said as tenderly as I could manage, 'Rebinah, I may venture to denominate you by that appellation, with the captivating prefix "dear," with

brothers had arrived.

There were the pasteboards. Abraham Toadwell, Barnabas Toadwell, Charles Toadwell, and Dionysius Toadwell. An ingenious parent had evidently named them alphabetically, and they had, I learned, all called together. Three cards were alike—that is, of course, with the exception of the variations in the names; but the fourth was a curious and ominous exception. On the card of Mr. Dionysius Toadwell there was drawn above the name a death's head and cross-bones, and beneath it a neat coffin, and that, horrible to relate, bore my own name. I nearly fainted. Here was a bloodthirsty miscreant, who, not content with harbouring thoughts of vengeance against me, had positively threatened me in this odious fashion. For a moment I thought of flight, for if anything gives me a cold chill it is the bare idea of a coffin; but I reflected. There would be time enough to fly when I found how matters stood.

I was not long left in suspense. As I stood with my gaze riveted to the fatal card, I heard a yell outside, and as I looked up I saw four malevolent faces peering in over the railings, and as I stared in astonishment—bang! came a boot through the open window, and struck me an awful blow on the nose. That organ being a tender point with me, I subsided on to the floor, and was for a few moments unconscious.

When I came to my senses I found the four Toadwells gathered round me, and Dionysius—I knew it must have been *his* boot—was putting that missile on. They all shouted at once, like a chorus at the opera, 'Villain, give up our sister!' and Dionysius added, 'or we'll have your life.'

This was a pleasant commence-

not to be bullied. So I said, with as much dignity as I could command, feeling my nose visibly swelling,

'Gentlemen, I am willing to discuss the matter with you; but it must be done peaceably, and not with boots. That individual,' and I looked scathingly at Dionysius, 'is liable to damages for an assault.'

'Hang your assaults!' he cried, furiously snatching a knife off the table. 'Give up Rebinah, you bald-headed bandersnatch, or take the consequences!'

I found out afterwards that Dionysius had lived nearly all his life in the backwoods, and that language like that and boots was his idea of elegant *badinage*. I can only say it was not mine.

'Keep quiet, Dion,' said Abraham, who was evidently the eldest, and who resembled his sister, except that both his eyes squinted outwards. 'Doubtless Mr. Joram will listen to reason.'

'Yes,' said Barnabas. 'Now, Mr. Joram, will you give up Rebinah?'

'I could not think of such a thing,' I answered with emphasis. 'Your dear and beautiful sister' ('Yah!' said Dion at the epithets) 'loves me, and I will not betray her trust.'

The three elder brothers exchanged glances, and Dionysius took a knife, and began sawing it suggestively across his throat in a way that made my blood run cold.

Then Abraham said quietly and civilly, 'Well, Mr. Joram, we must talk this over, and I daresay we can arrange matters. Will you give us the pleasure of your company to dinner at the hotel to-night?'

I was rather puzzled at this sudden civility, but I said, 'I shall

be most happy;' and then the four Toadwells filed out, Dionysius going last, and turning to make a playful dig at me with his bowie-knife as he retired, which would have gone clean into me, but for the merciful interposition of six-pennyworth of coppers which lurked in my waistcoat pocket. There was a brother-in-law who should never darken our doors when Rebinah was mine, and his name began with a D.

I determined to go to that feed. A dinner is a dinner even when you have to eat it in the company of three villains and a rampant backwoodsman, and I repaired to the inn at the appointed hour.

Over that dinner I would fain draw a veil, but truth urges me on. I attended, arrayed in a solemn suit of customary black, a dress in which I have the unpleasant consciousness that I look like a rather bibulous waiter out of employment. The brothers, all in evening-dress also, received me with much politeness, with the exception of Dionysius, whose looks were still of the most ferocious description.

The dinner was a good one, and the wine flowed freely. I am a careful man, and never exceed some three glasses of port after dinner, and on this occasion I drank no more. But the wine had a most terrible effect upon me. Even during dinner I had begun to feel dazed and stupid, and after dinner I seemed to have the greatest difficulty in keeping my eyes open. I am certain now that the wine was drugged. At all events, it is painful to relate that about an hour after dinner I totally succumbed in the middle of an eloquent speech, in which I found myself unconsciously imitating dear Rebinah's phraseology, the words running into each other at a most alarming rate. I have

a confused remembrance of people gathering round me, and of a waiter offering me something to do me good, and then I can recall nothing more in the dining-room.

I don't quite know how long I was unconscious—it seemed to me hours—but when I awoke I found myself in a position which I devoutly hope never to occupy again.

I was tied hand and foot, and fastened up in a sack!

A cold perspiration gathered on my marble brow, and I endeavoured to recall my scattered senses. Dionysius Toadwell was at the bottom of this diabolical plot, of that I was certain, but in the mean time I was at the bottom of the sack.

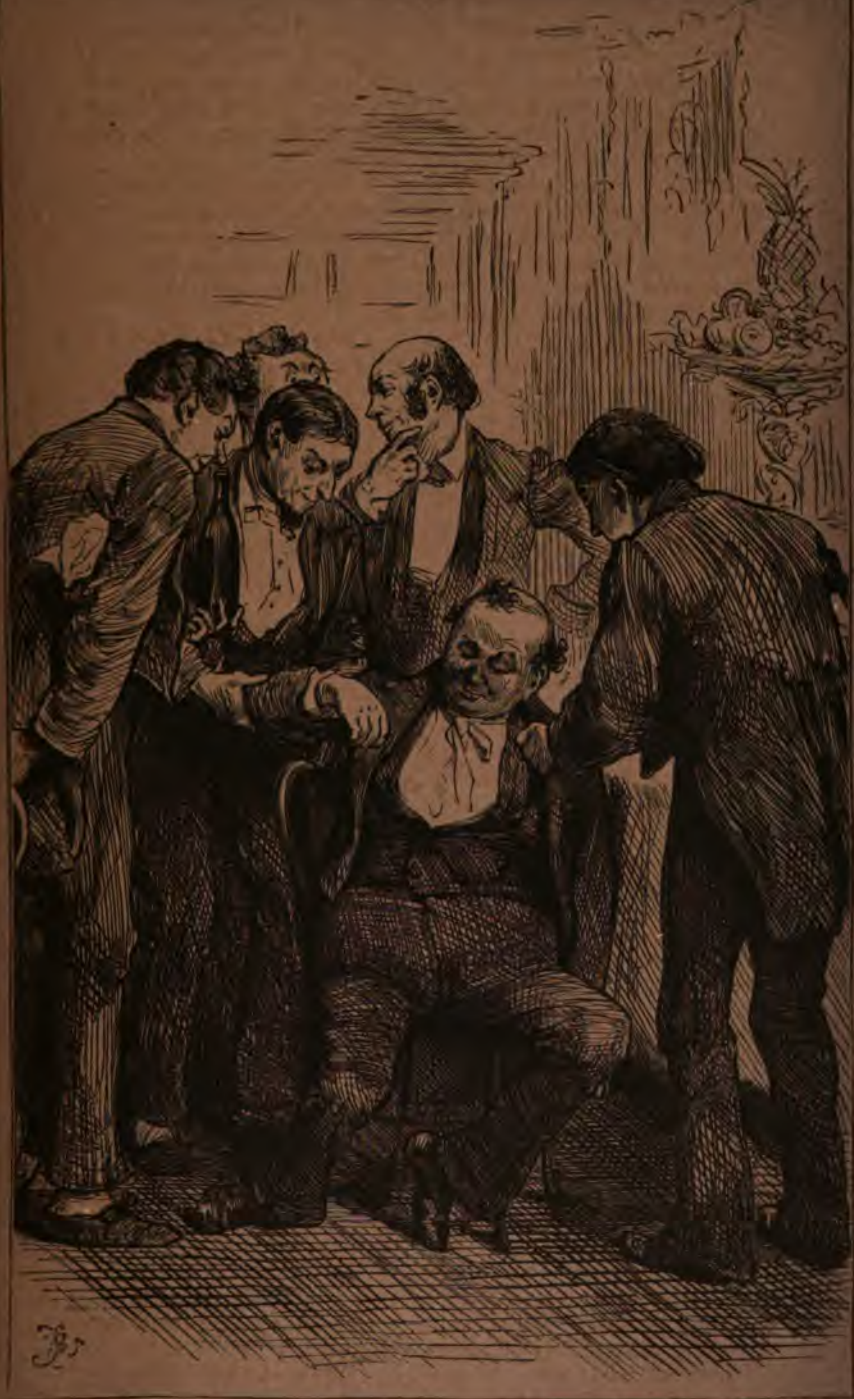
I was lying on the beach too, for I could feel the hard shingle, and hear the murmur of the waves. I never go near the sea now, for the sound of it makes me shiver. What were these fiends going to do? To drown me, or to take me off like a bale of goods to waste my bachelor sweetness in a foreign clime? Both thoughts were terrible, and it needed all my energies not to faint away.

I was not left long in suspense. As I lay in my sack I heard a voice—Dionysius, of course—saying, 'Chuck the old man in, it's far the cheapest and easiest way of getting rid of him; and if he's well weighted, he won't come up again.'

Chuck me in! The inhuman wretch! Here was an ending to the existence of an elderly butterfly! O, how I execrated my too susceptible heart, and the polysyllabic Rebinah!

'No, no,' said another voice; 'wait till the lugger comes round, and we'll tell them not to open him till they're well out at sea.'





MR. JOKAM'S ENGAGEMENT.



The lugger! That sounded like smugglers or pirates, and I should be keel-hauled or have to walk the plank. O, that I had never seen her circumvoluting eye!

I roused myself, however, and summoned up courage to make an appeal for freedom and life. 'Gentlemen,' I began, when I was raised up and flung violently down on the stones, Dionysius exclaiming, 'He's awake; chuck him in before he knows where he is.'

'Mercy, mercy!' I shrieked. 'Let me out and let me go, and I'll never go near your sister again.'

A prod with what I imagine was the end of Dionysius's knife was the only answer at first, and that made me yell with agony; then one of them said, 'Very well; if you will promise to leave Seaford the first thing in the morning, we will spare you.'

'Promise!' I shouted; 'I will promise everything, anything!'

There was a murmur and a movement, and then a voice whispered in my ear, 'Lie still here

for an hour, and you shall be free; move before that time, and you are a dead man.'

Then I heard them go, some one (Dionysius again!) bestowing a parting kick upon me.

Not for several hours did I dare to move. When I crawled out—for I found the bag had been untied—it was early morning. I rushed home, put up my clothes, and fled from the fatal place. What happened to Rebinah I never knew; but if *her* little escapade was treated like mine, I should say she is now lying fathoms deep beneath Beachey Head.

It was some months before I got over the shock, and to this day I have never again ventured to a seaside place. Nor have I ever heard of Rebinah. It is probable she is still unmarried, protected by that terrible band of brothers. As for me, I have made no further effort to enter the bonds of matrimony. I am quite content with my last engagement.



MY THREE WEEKS' HOLIDAY, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

CHAPTER I.

THE JOURNEY.

WE were sitting over our wine, and solacing ourselves with some very mild cigars in my friend Jack's chambers, on a close sultry evening in that hottest of months August, and we had drawn our chairs to the window, trying in vain to get even a suspicion of fresh air. The very thought of country scenes and sounds, or of the sea-breezes about which we had been talking since dinner, made us feel restless and almost nervous lest we should by some ill luck not get as much of either as we might during our impending three weeks' holiday. I had told Jack my views (or rather those of others for me), and he was proceeding to demolish my castles in the air in much the following style :

'Now look here, my dear fellow, don't be absurd, and want me to think that you are following your own wishes in spending the next three weeks in Buckinghamshire, because I simply disbelieve you. Your great-aunt is, I have no doubt, a most worthy old lady, but you can't persuade me that a holiday spent with her and her ancient daughters will be worth the name of one.'

'All very well, my dear Jack,' I replied, 'but you see "needs must" when somebody, who shall be nameless, drives the team; and though I candidly confess the prospect is not a tempting one, it will at any rate save my pocket, and that is a great object to me in the present state of my finances.'

'O, rubbish! Why, you are twenty times better off than I am, waiting for briefs that never come, and yet I give you my word nothing would induce me to devote my holiday to driving an old lady about in a pony phaeton, carrying the spinster cousins' galoshes, or making a fourth at their whist-table in the evenings. A fellow once said to me that his idea of a real holiday was to be able to lie all day on a quiet beach, and throw stones into the water. Now that is not my notion. Depend upon it excitement of a totally different kind from your general employment is the thing. And now for my grand proposition—let's go abroad. What say you?'

My hair (I had not very much) almost stood on end at the idea, for I had been brought up at a quiet north-country rectory, the only boy among six sisters, and even my coming to London was looked upon as a highly dangerous experiment, though I was to be articled to an uncle, a solicitor of good standing. Nothing but the fact of my residing in his house (where the old servant who superintended his bachelor establishment undertook to look after 'Master Tom,' and see that he did not put on damp shirts, &c.) would have induced my mother to consent. One whole year I had worked steadily, and my uncle had given me leave to have three weeks' holiday, and to spend it where and in what manner I pleased. Through the medium of my mother an invitation had been sent me by an aunt of her

own to spend a part of the time with her in Buckinghamshire. 'You may rely, my dear niece,' she wrote, 'that we will take every care of dear Tom; we are very quiet people, and with us he will be quite safe from any kind of dissipation.' The prospect had never seemed very charming, but now since my chosen friend and greatest chum had turned it into ridicule, and had dared to propose so bold a thing as starting off on our own account, it presented a still more sombre aspect.

'Now I'll tell you what,' said Jack; 'we must get medical authority for this. Old Dr. Spear- ing is a great friend of mine, and also of your uncle's; we'll get him to say that sea-bathing is absolutely necessary for your constitution after such a spell of hard work as you have had. Once convince your mother of that, and it will be all right.'

I need not enter into the details of the next few days; suffice it to say that we called on the doctor, who rubbed his hands, chuckled, and, after poking us both in the ribs and calling us a couple of scamps, promised to report on the delicate state of my nervous system to my uncle, and finally wished he were young enough to be able to join us. All went well till my mother's reply came, and then I discovered that she could not reconcile her mind to her dear boy crossing the sea. 'O, could not Mr. Pridham find any place on the English coast where the water was equally beneficial?'

'Good gracious, no!' shouted Jack. 'Write and tell your mother that the water in which I propose you should take your first dip has been blessed with no end of religious ceremonies, is universally acknowledged to be possessed of wonderful properties of all kinds. But, my dear fellow, you really

must act for yourself some time or other, and it is as well to begin at once. Now my advice is this: write a nice little consoling letter to the mater, and forget to post it till you are the other side of the Channel; then her fears as to the dangers of the voyage will at any rate be at an end.'

I took his advice in this as in most other things, wrote my letter on Friday, and one memorable Saturday embarked about twelve o'clock on board the steamship H. plying between London and O., the place we were going to. That she was a very fine vessel I have no doubt, and I wish to cast no reflection on her; I only know the time I passed on board was by far the most miserable of my life so far as it has gone at present. For the first three or four hours I really enjoyed myself greatly; the sense of freedom from being taken care of, and of having a twenty-pound note (besides some small change) in my pocket, really made me feel like an independent man. As for Jack, he was as merry as possible. It was by no means his first trip abroad, but he made me feel quite irritated by the persistent way in which he rushed up and down into the saloon to assure himself that my berth had not been appropriated.

'Because you see, old fellow, you may be glad to turn in before we get there.'

'Not likely,' I replied, and paraded the upper deck, and heard the captain telling Jack about a terrible voyage he had once made in a snowstorm, and showing him the watch the passengers had presented him with in admiration of his conduct.

'You see, sir, the inscription,' he said, handing it to me. I have no doubt whatever it was there, but somehow I could not read it well, and was beginning to have

some misgivings about the steadiness of the famous steamer, and to have some doubts as to my prudence in having embarked in her at all. Jack, watching me as a cat does a mouse, drew my arm within his, and said,

'I think, old fellow, a little brandy-and-water and a turn into our berths will about suit both of us.'

'God bless him for the suggestion,' I shall always say.

The brandy-and-water proved a miserable failure as far as I was concerned, and I draw a veil over the next few hours. I am told that during the evening some barbarians partook of tea with chops, steaks, and broiled ham. I can only say I was not one of the number. A cheery voice at last said in my ear,

'Jump up, old fellow; we are in the harbour, and you'll be all right now. But really you've been a capital sailor.'

Had I, indeed! Well, perhaps so; and raising my head wearily, I said,

'Well, I don't think I have done so badly after all.'

A great noise and confusion overhead, then a stop, and a babel of voices, such as I had never heard before. Jack seized hold of my arm, and we made our way over a narrow gangway on to the quay.

'But, Jack, my portmanteau!' I exclaimed.

'O, don't bother,' replied he; 'it will turn up all right.'

Leaning on Jack's arm I managed to stagger along, and found myself seated on a bench in a long dirty-looking room, still amidst a hideous confusion of tongues. Jack, who seemed about as cheery as if he had just taken a run from London Bridge to Blackfriars in a penny steamer, soon left me to dash after a man in a linen blouse, who was

shouldering our *impedimenta*. I really felt as if I did not much care what became of that or myself; but even my feelings were presently aroused by seeing a stout official-looking personage proceeding to unfasten the straps of my portmanteau, and muttering in a gruff voice,

'*A qui est-ce ?*'

'Hey!' cried I; 'O, that's mine.'

'*Monsieur, vous avez rien à déclarer ?*'

'O, good heavens, what is he saying?' ejaculated I, looking round in despair for my *fidus Achates*, who was lost to view in the crowd.

'The officer is asking if you have anything to declare,' said a rather gentlemanly-looking man close to my elbow.

Declare? thought I; nothing except that I am deadly sick, and wish with all my heart I was in my aunt's quiet house in Buckinghamshire. Up rushed Jack, puffing and panting, and exhibited, as I thought, a most unwarrantable anxiety to have my portmanteau opened. Curiously enough the more anxious he seemed the less so became the officer, who, finally giving it a scratch and a shove, intimated that we were at liberty to proceed. Out into the open air again, and amid a worse babel than ever. How we reached our hotel I do not know, but I am morally certain to this day that had I landed alone I should have been found torn limb from limb, and deposited in small particles in the different places of accommodation so urgently pressed on my notice, in a language the harshness of which I cannot attempt to describe. When at last I stretched myself on the small bed, of which Jack had an exact counterpart, I was still under an impression that I was in that famous steamer, so persistently did everything appear

not prepossessing; but it was made singularly objectionable by the peculiarly cold steel-blue eyes, which, without looking straight at you, seemed to be always calculating the depth of your mental capacity. Duplicity and low cunning were the prevailing characteristics of his countenance.

By his side sat a girl of perhaps nineteen or twenty, a blonde in complexion, with bright golden hair drawn back from her face and simply confined with a band and rosette of crimson velvet; her dress of white muslin (which, though plainly made and high to the throat, showed through the transparent folds the delicate whiteness and rounded contour of the neck and shoulders) had no other ornament than a band of crimson and a narrow velvet of the same colour round the neck, from which hung a locket containing one magnificent diamond. Her face, perhaps, could not be called strictly beautiful—the nose too *retroussée* and the mouth rather large, but displaying white and regular teeth; her eyes of a deep gray shaded with lashes long and of a darker shade than her hair, and which gave a look of repose to her face. Unconsciously one's gaze rested longer on her than on the dashing furbelowed damsels round the table, with the same feeling that coming suddenly upon a tranquil bit of landscape while the train is whirling one from city to city you look with a lingering longing gaze from the window of your carriage, and feel as if there at least you might rest for a few moments in peace.

By her side, and pressing upon her attentions evidently most unwelcome, sat a tall dark-whiskered man with a heavy drooping moustache; there was a *roué* air about him, savouring much of *cafés* and billiard-rooms, and looking as if his

entrée to respectable society would not be easy to obtain. An animated conversation was kept up between the two gentlemen, but as it was entirely in French I was in ignorance of the subjects they discussed. Occasionally they would refer to the young lady, but her replies were always given with a weary and preoccupied air. Once I noticed that in passing something the dark man touched her hand. A crimson flush spread over her face, and she passed her handkerchief quickly over the spot, as if to wipe off some stain. Jack, generally so talkative and merry, seemed, much to my surprise, to be suddenly struck dumb and entirely occupied with watching the party opposite. At last, when the dinner was nearly over, he whispered to me,

'For Heaven's sake, Tom, let us get out of this!'

Leaving the table and returning to our room he threw himself into a chair, and exclaimed,

'She is lovely, positively lovely; but a victim to those two men!'

I stared at him with the greatest surprise. A particle of romance about Jack was the last quality I expected to find displayed, and I suppose my look of utter bewilderment struck him as ludicrous; for he burst into a somewhat forced laugh, and proposed our going to the Kursaal to take our coffee and smoke our cigars.

The strains of the band fell on our ears as we threaded our way through a brilliantly - dressed crowd who were sitting in groups about the building; the sea was as calm as a lake, and the sun was setting gloriously. Having secured a table, we proceeded to sip our coffee, and I thoroughly to enjoy the novel and to me exciting scene. Not very far from us I noticed a group of men engaged in what seemed a very absorbing game of

dominoes. In two of them I recognised our friends of the dinner-table, but nowhere could I see the young lady. Not indeed that I took much trouble to find her; but Jack made repeated excursions about the building, and as each time he returned with a gloomier face than before I concluded he had been unsuccessful in his search.

About ten o'clock we mounted a handsome staircase and found ourselves in the ballrooms, which were already crowded. Much as I enjoyed hearing the band and watching the gay scene, I could not quite get over my early prejudices and consent to join the dancers, though pressed to do so by some of the friends Jack had made in the morning. He of course was soon in the thickest of it; and finding myself alone and the crowd and heat increasing every moment, I walked out into a long room devoted to the promenaders, and stepping through an open window upon a balcony I enjoyed the cool night air, and at the same time commanded a view of the animated scene within. I had stood there but a short time when I heard Jack's voice in earnest conversation with some one who was seated with him on one of the benches just inside the window. A mirror on the opposite side enabled me to see that his companion was the same young lady who had excited so much interest a few hours before; her colour was heightened by dancing, she was speaking eagerly, and tears stood in her lovely eyes, into which Jack was gazing with an immense show of devotion.

'Yes, indeed it is so,' she was saying; 'I am now here without a friend to help me.'

'Do not say that,' he exclaimed; 'I would do anything to serve you if you would put confidence in my desire to be of use.'

A slight smile curled her lip.

'I am speaking of a friend of my own sex,' she replied, 'one to whom I could go for protection from—I can hardly say it—my own father and the man who has in a manner bought me. Horrible as it may seem, I am convinced that my father has become so much and so deeply involved with Count L. that he dare not thwart his wishes, which unfortunately are to make me his wife. Relatives I have none except one, my father's aunt, at present travelling for her health, and whose address I do not even know; she has a large property, to which my father looks to redeem his fortune. If I could only interest her in my favour I should be safe, for he would not dare to act against her wishes, and she has always urged on me her desire that I should make no foreign alliance.'

'Take courage,' said Jack, 'and command my services in any way. Did you not see how gallantly I flew to the rescue, and carried you off for the waltz for which your tormentor was crossing the room to claim you?'

'Ah, and did you not see the expression on his face as he turned away—another slight to be returned with interest when he has me in his power? See, he has already sought my father, and they are coming to me. I dare not remain longer here; take me at once to my place.'

They rose, and Jack escorted her to the other room, and placed her beside a sleepy withered-looking old lady who was nodding away the two hours' duty of chaperon, and evidently feeling no interest whatever in the unhappy girl placed under her charge.

I came in from the balcony, and was presently joined by Jack, looking very disconsolate. He complained of being tired, and suggested our going back to the

hotel; but on reaching the door he said,

'Go to bed, old fellow; I feel restless, and am going to take a turn by the sea.'

At another time I should have proposed accompanying him; but knowing what I did I felt sure that my presence would be unwelcome, so I bade him good-night and entered the hotel.

CHAPTER III.

MY ADVENTURE.

PASSING slowly up the staircase I was arrested by hearing a waiter, who was in the entrance-hall, say (waving his hand towards me), 'Voilà, monsieur.' At the same time a tall man advanced, in whom I recognised the person who had come to my assistance in the custom-house the night before. Making me a profound bow, he addressed me in very fair English. 'Pardon, monsieur; could I have the honour of speaking a word with you? I believe I saw your name in the visitors' book this morning.'

My first thought was that he was about to question me on the correctness of Jack's absurd entries, and very fervently wished he were there to give his own explanations. I turned cold and hot alternately as my friend opened the door of a small apartment and invited me to enter. Begging me to be seated, he said,

'I am in a most serious difficulty, but one in which I think you may be able to assist me.'

I was as much at a loss as before, but very considerably relieved to find the difficulty was his instead of mine.

'I must explain to you, monsieur, that I am acting as courier to a lady who arrived here yesterday from Rome. She has been seized

with an attack of paralysis, and I am anxious to secure your services in her behalf.'

'But, sir,' said I, rising, 'you are mistaken. I am not a medical man.'

'I am quite aware of that, monsieur; the most eminent in the place are already in attendance. But, if I mistake not, you are of the legal profession. My lady is most anxious to add a codicil to a will she executed some time ago. She was hastening to England for that purpose; but in all human probability she will never rise from her bed again, and her anxiety respecting this business the physician declares is hindering even the small hope there is of her recovery. Your arrival here seems to point out a way in which her mind may be set at rest; and I ask if you will consent to accompany me to her bedside and draw up the document.'

I hesitated a little, and wished Jack had been there to be consulted. Perhaps I was going to be made an actor in some unfair transaction. Really matters looked serious.

My companion evidently waited anxiously for my reply, and, seeing my hesitation, he added,

'I assure you, monsieur, this will not affect you in any way; and you will have the comfort of feeling that you have helped to soothe the last hours of a most estimable lady, and one who has an additional claim in being a country-woman of your own.'

I felt I could no longer refuse, and expressed my willingness to accompany him at once.

Passing up the staircase and along a corridor, he stopped at a door at the extreme end, and knocked softly. It was opened immediately by a lady about thirty years of age, with a quiet patient face, but with so much goodness



MR. JORAM'S ENGAGEMENT



and petted by my mother and sisters, two of whom were to make a couple of former curates the happiest of men in a few months' time. My travels added largely to my importance among the simple country-folk, and I am afraid I drew at times on my imagination in order to increase the wonders of them; but never did I allow myself to allude in any way to my one adventure, which had produced such golden results to me. Not knowing quite what to do with my hundred pounds, I resolved to place it in a bank, and to devote some part of it to the purchase of wedding-gifts for my sisters when the time for the double marriage arrived.

For some time past I had seen less of Jack than formerly, and I noticed that he seemed altered, certainly more steady, and working, as he himself expressed it, 'like a nigger.' My uncle had been able to give him several briefs, and I knew he had acquitted himself well, and given satisfaction to the clients; so I hoped that times were looking up for my friend.

After my return at Christmas a sudden press of business kept me very close to the office; but I had sent Jack word of my return, and wondered greatly not to have seen his merry face and heard his hearty 'Well, old fellow!' long before; for now we had reached the middle of February. One day, therefore, when my uncle suggested that it would be beneficial for me to take a good long walk before going home to dinner, I determined that my first proceeding should be to hunt up Jack, and if possible to carry him home to my uncle's to dinner; for the old gentleman was hospitably disposed, and had moreover a bin of tawny port, which always made Jack's eyes sparkle and his tongue go quicker.

On reaching Jack's chambers, I found, early as it was, that both

he and his young clerk had left for the night; so I had nothing for it but to write an urgent entreaty to know what had become of him on a card, and push it under the door, and set off for my constitutional by myself. I decided on making for the Regent's Park, and was soon mingling in the throng of nursemaids and children of all sorts and of various degrees of cleanliness, who habitually frequent the 'Broad Walk' on a fine bright afternoon. On reaching the entrance to the Zoological Gardens, I found on looking at my watch that I should barely have time to reach Fitz-square by my uncle's dinner-hour, which was as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. I turned, therefore, and was hurrying along at full speed, when I caught sight of my friend Jack coming towards me, but looking so thin and ill that I hardly knew him for my cheery bright-faced chum. At first, to my great surprise, he seemed half disposed to avoid me; but I could not bear that, and darting up to him laid my hand on his shoulder before he had time to decide what to do.

'Good heavens!' I exclaimed. 'where have you been, and what have you been doing, to make such a scarecrow of yourself? Why, I declare, you are losing all your good looks.'

'Short commons, my dear boy,' he said. 'I never was good at living on nothing a day, and that is what I am nearly come to now.'

Utterly astonished and perplexed I linked my arm in his, and, entirely forgetting time and dinner I began walking with him in the direction he was going. Well thought I, here will be an opportunity for using some of my little store; and surely Jack had more claim on it than any one, since but for him it would never have com-

into my possession. However, I only said, as cheerfully as I could,

'Come, old fellow, make a clean breast of it; let there be no secrets between us.'

'Ah, I know, dear Tom, you have always told me everything' (had I?); 'but, you see, this did not concern myself alone. However, things have now reached such a crisis that I can struggle no longer independently; and I was only to-day thinking of applying to your uncle for any copying or clerk's work he could give me.'

'But, Jack,' exclaimed I, 'you amaze me; I do not understand it at all. You are a rising young barrister, are you not?'

'Possibly I may be,' replied he; 'but that does not prevent my being often a very hungry young barrister.' The sickly smile and mournful attempt at his old cheerfulness with which he uttered these words cut me to the heart, and I was silent for a moment, really not knowing what reply to make, or how to offer him aid in circumstances I could not comprehend.

'Well, Tom, dear old fellow, I will tell you everything,' said he; 'but bear in mind one thing, that whatever comes of it, I can never regret the step I have taken. I am living close by; come home with me, if you can.'

I had visions of my uncle standing on the hearthrug warming his coat-tails in true British fashion, watching the door anxiously for my appearance, lest the fish should be boiled to rags. But to leave Jack was not to be thought of; so I agreed to his proposal, and walked off with him in the direction of Primrose Hill. Passing a little to the right of it, we came to a terrace of small mean-looking houses, which needed not the cards in the window to show were let in lodgings, and, to judge by the number of vacancies, 'Hill-terrace' was not a favourite

locality. Stopping at one of the cleanest-looking houses, Jack took out a key and opened a door. We found ourselves in a passage, in which two people could by no possibility have walked abreast. Opening a door on the right we entered a small neat-looking room. Some flowers in the window, a bright fire, and a work-basket on a small table gave it a habitable and comfortable appearance. The cloth was laid for dinner, but evidently with very meagre preparations. More and more I wondered, when Jack, knocking at a door opening into an inner room, said, 'Come, my love, and be introduced to an old friend.'

The door opened, and out walked the identical young lady whom we had met at the *table d'hôte* abroad. My surprise and bewilderment even made Jack forget his troubles and burst into a hearty laugh.

'Allow me,' he said, 'to introduce you to my wife; I think you have met before.'

I stammered out my congratulations awkwardly enough, and then, dropping into a chair, had leisure to notice what time had done for my fair friend. She looked older in years, but decidedly happier; the weary depressed expression had almost gone, and she looked more like a person who had been through a great trial than one who was at present suffering. A bright smile lit up her pretty features as, turning to me with winning grace, she expressed her pleasure at seeing me. Jack was evidently proud of her beauty, and anxiously watched the impression it made upon me.

'I hope, Letty,' he said, 'we can stretch our dinner into enough for three, for I am afraid I have been the means of bringing my friend away from his.'

'O,' I exclaimed, 'don't think of me; I really did not come with any intention—'

'Now shut up, old fellow,' cried

Jack. 'Letty will see to it; we have not yet quite arrived at starvation point, though how soon it may come Heaven only knows.'

A very simple repast was soon on the table, and when finished we drew our chairs to the fire, and Jack fulfilled his promise of telling me the circumstances that had led him into his present position.

It appeared that after his return to London he one day encountered the young lady and her father in Regent-street. As all his efforts to trace them before had been fruitless, he was determined not to lose sight of them again; so he followed them without being observed to their lodgings in a street leading from the Strand. Through the medium of the servant of the house he contrived to get a letter conveyed to the young lady, who in reply told him she was in greater trouble than ever. Her father had come into possession of a large property by the death of his aunt; that he had married a woman of low birth, who made her home miserable. Her father treated her more unkindly than ever, and persecuted her to fulfil her engagement to Count L. She had at last consented, feeling that no life could be worse than the one she was then leading, and they had come to London to make the necessary preparations for the wedding. Jack was nearly beside himself on reading the letter, and after several stolen interviews prevailed on her to consent to a private marriage, and took his bride home to a fire-side which had little but love to brighten it. Exasperated at the failure of his plans, her father refused to see them, and even declined to continue the small allowance his daughter had hitherto received for her own expenses.

'But indeed,' observed Jack, 'if what we hear is correct, he will soon be a beggar himself, for, with

the help of his friend Count L., he is gambling away all his income. Fortunately the principal he cannot squander, though he can, I believe, will it to any one he chooses.'

'I do not believe,' said Letty, in a voice half-choked by sobs, 'that if my aunt had had any idea of my father's pursuit she would have left me without some provision; for there never lived a better and kinder creature than my aunt Fairclough.'

'Probably had she lived a single day after reaching England things might have been different,' said Jack; 'but she was seized with a second attack of paralysis which carried her off within a few hours of her landing. Oddly enough, Tom, she was staying in the same hotel at O. that we were, and her life was there despaired of.'

Was I in a dream, or could it be possible? The name had struck me as familiar, and what Jack now said convinced me that the heroine of my adventure and Letty's aunt were one and the same person, and if so what a change in the prospects of the young couple! Jack must certainly have thought me a candidate for Bedlam; for jumping up, I exclaimed, wringing his hand till he roared for mercy,

'It's all right, dear old chap; I altered the will.'

'You did what?' shouted he. 'Tom, are you gone mad?'

'Not quite, though very nearly so with joy. Now look here, don't lose an hour, but put some things together, take the family lawyer, and go at once to the English Consul at O., and desire him to deliver up the paper which was left in his hands in September last; and if you do not come back a richer and a happier man I'll give you leave to call me a Dutchman, or anything else equally complimentary.'

Hurrying away, I declined any

more explanation, but agreed to meet him in three days' time at his office.

I did so, and found there had been no difficulty made about giving up the document to the solicitor; and its instructions were then being acted upon. The purport of the deed was to state the testator had only just been made aware that her nephew and heir to whom she had left her property was passing his time and making a precarious living at gambling-rooms; she therefore entirely revoked her former will, and constituted Letitia Fairclough her sole heiress, with the single provision that she did not marry a foreigner; in that case it was to revert to a distant connection. Little did I think when writing those stiff legal words that they would so greatly affect the happiness of my dearest friend. I had never by any chance heard Jack mention the name of the fair lady in whom he took so much interest, so remained in total ignorance of the connection.

Mr. Fairclough at first threatened to dispute the fresh will; but as Jack behaved very liberally to him, and he became convinced that the case was too strongly got up against him, he determined not to contest it, and retired to the Continent, where I have no doubt he is still to be found frequenting the card and billiard tables by any one

who may be inclined to seek him.

The fortune came to Jack just when he was in a position to turn it to good account; he had plenty of talent, and only required a start. A few years saw him in a fair way to become one of our leading barristers, with a first-rate connection. His charming wife is now the happy mother of several very lively children, the eldest of whom (my godson), I regret to say, follows his father's disrespectful example, and salutes me with a 'Well, old fellow!' when I go down to pay my usual Sunday visit at their pretty villa on the banks of the Thames. Still, in spite of his want of reverence, I have invested in his name the hundred pounds which was the only secret I had ever kept from my friend Jack. Though a constant witness of the happiness of their household, I have as yet not found any temptation strong enough to induce me to form one for myself; but some day, when the old house at Fitz-square grows too lonely (for I am now its sole occupant), and when I can find some one as charming as my friend's wife, I may be open to conviction; and I have determined that at least part of our honeymoon shall be passed in the place where the little adventure which I have related occurred, and which had so happy an effect on us both.

ON BOARD THE ILIONE.

A Tale of Love's Sacrifice.

I.

PLAYTIME.

'THEY say that a man-of-war is coming here for the summer. Sir Henry told me that the Arabs are getting troublesome again, and that the Government is going to send a ship to look after them. I do hope it is true! One does get so tired of the same eternal round of dulness. Nothing to look forward to from month to month but a dinner at the French Consul's, or a picnic on the island, where one always meets the same men, and knows by instinct exactly what they will say upon any given subject. And if a man-of-war comes the officers will be sure to give some dances on board; and then their band can come and play to us on shore in the evening—at least there will be something to look forward to, even if after all it doesn't come up to our expectations. I wonder whether anything ever does come up to one's expectations? It is such a bore to get excited about anything in this hot climate, but I feel almost as if I could. I haven't seen you for an age, Alice; you have been as invisible lately as an eclipse at Greenwich. Have you heard anything about it? Tell me all the news you have heard since I saw you last.'

'Kenrick Stuart told me this morning that the *Ilione* would be here in a month. I think that was the name. I don't think he quite likes the idea of other men coming here, *Irenè*.'

'O, I am so glad—I mean about

the *Ilione*. I know Captain Vivian, who commands her; we met him often when we were last in England. As for Kenrick, it will do him good to be a little jealous. He does bore me so sometimes. Of course he is very faithful and devoted, but a spaniel would be that.'

'Poor Kenrick, I think you are very hard on him! He spent the whole of yesterday looking for the paintbox you lost.'

'Yes, he certainly is very useful,' *Irenè* acknowledged; and soon the conversation drifted into the absorbing subject of dress.

Irenè was the only daughter of Sir Henry Henderson, the governor of a small colony in the Indian seas, called Zibar. It consisted of a town and two or three hundred square miles of the adjoining territory, where all the beauty of tropical vegetation was found. The heat, though overpowering for many hours of the day, was tempered by the delicious sea-breeze in the evening. Just in front of the town, and making a natural breakwater for it, was a little island hardly half a mile in length. In the sound between it and the mainland many a kind of vessel could be seen at anchor, from the ocean mail-steamer to the picturesque Arab dhow.

The *Ilione*, a small corvette, came out from England late one autumn and joined the flagship at Bombay. The winter months were passed in fleet evolutions and steam tactics, and in the spring some of the smaller vessels of the squadron were sent away to the outlying stations of the command.

On board the *Ilione* betting ran high as to her destination. The Persian Gulf—that frying-pan of Asia—was the favourite, but only in the sense of standing highest in the betting; while no one dared even to hope that the *Ilione* would be sent to Zibar.

At last the orders came. One of the gunboats which had been laid down by the mile during the Crimean war, and cut off into lengths as required, was sent to the Persian Gulf, and the *Ilione* to Zibar. Every one was delighted, except a navigating sub-lieutenant, who had put a lot of money on the Persian Gulf, and whom heat affected as little as it did a salamander.

‘Bompas will be melancholy for a month,’ said Hutton to Graves, when he relieved him on the bridge at midnight, and had read the night orders; ‘and I believe that nothing less than the prospect of a general European war would console him for the loss of his money. He is cleaning his sextant in the gunroom now, which he always does when there is anything on his mind.’

‘I suggested that he should try and get an exchange into the *Mermaid*, as he seemed so anxious to go to the Persian Gulf, which made him furious. Well, I think I shall turn in. I don’t envy you your watch. It’s a nasty night.’

‘Beastly. It’s all very well for sentimental young women to sing of the romance of “standing on the bridge at midnight,” but when that bridge is the bridge of a crank man-of-war, and you can’t see further than the jibboom, and you get drenched with spray every two minutes, the position is, to say the least of it, a disagreeable one,’ growled Hutton, as Graves went away.

Vivian, who commanded the *Ilione*, entered the service just be-

fore the Crimean war. Never was so mad a midshipman. One winter at Malta the harbour was reported to be haunted. In the dark hours of the night a spectral boat with a dim lantern and a ghostly figure plying the oars would come alongside the ships at anchor, and challenge the sentry at the gangway in a wailing voice. Boats might be lowered in pursuit, but the phantom bark was not caught. Dockyard officials talked nervously about Russian spies sounding the entrance, and the Admiral Superintendent was furious whenever the subject was mentioned. The marines, who believe anything you choose to tell them, were of opinion that the boat was manned by the ghost of one of the Knights of Malta, who had lost his armour overboard when he reached Valletta from Rhodes. At last, however, a rationalistic petty officer laid an ambush, and the boat was caught, but not the crew. The crew jumped overboard with a halo of phosphorescent light around him, and was lost in the night. Soon Vivian was ordered to the Black Sea, and the unquiet spirit was seen no more among the ships at night. A day or two after Vivian’s departure the captain of one of the smartest frigates on the station received an order, purporting to come from the admiral, to get up steam immediately and go to the coast of Sicily to search for a sea-serpent which three fishermen said they had seen there.

Vivian was next heard of at the seat of war. One morning, when his ship was blockading Odessa, he was reported absent from morning quarters. Before the dawn he had slipped down the side into a boat, and having armed himself with a revolver and a cutlass, rowed away to a sandy spit beyond the town to invade Russia. Hauling

up his boat, he waited till the gray morning came. It came at 6.30 A.M., and with it a solitary Cossack. The Cossack stared, and Vivian executed a strategic movement and surrounded him. With his revolver in one hand and his cutlass in the other, he forced that Cossack to surrender, and took him, bound as to his hands, to the boat. The lieutenant of the watch, whose life Vivian's pranks had often made a burden to him, was beginning to congratulate himself inwardly on having seen the last of him, when a boat hailed the ship. Another minute, and Vivian and a hulking Cossack, twice his size, and his prisoner of war, were tanding on the quarter-deck. The Cossack was sent to the naval prison at Lewes, and Vivian to a more airy situation at the masthead, for being absent without leave.

Soon afterwards his ship formed one of the fleet bombarding Sebastopol. The bombardment rather bored him after a time, and he yearned for something more exciting. So he made a bet with another midshipman that he would swim to the flagship and back, a distance of over a mile. With shot and shell playing about his head, and often nearly drowning him with spray when they struck the water near him, he went on and on till he reached the flagship, the smoke of whose guns hid him from sight. Then he took out of his mouth a rusty nail which he had brought for the purpose, and scratched his name on the copper sheathing just above the water-line at the bows. Thus having presented his autograph to the admiral, he returned to his own ship. This adventure nearly ended his naval career; the authorities declared that he had deserted his ship in action. But his own captain had once been a boy himself, and was able, though not without

great difficulty, to get this last offence overlooked.

With increasing years Vivian cooled down a little, and at last found himself a commander, and in charge of H.M.S. *Ilione* on the Indian station. While undergoing a course of gunnery in the Excellent he had met Irenè Henderson, and soon he had vague ideas of leaving the service and settling down with Irenè and love in a cottage. But she had no intention of allowing her charms to be wasted upon a half-pay commander who had no house in London; so after flirting with him for a long time she began to snub him, refused to wear the flowers he sent her, and ostentatiously showed her preference for Kenrick Stuart, her father's private secretary, and the probable heir to a rich old aunt with a house in Eaton-square. Her father was then at home on leave, in the interval between two colonial appointments. Irenè did not appreciate England, where, comparatively speaking, she was nobody; while in a colony, where her father was governor, she was supreme. And his success was due in a great measure to her. The colonials liked to be ruled over by that wonderfully beautiful woman, who, though she was said to have no heart, could be gracious to everybody. She held drawing-rooms, and gave herself, until a hint from home restrained her, some airs of sovereignty which did not ill become her. That she had consummate tact was proved by her universal popularity, even with her own sex. She looked forward to a time, which she hoped would really come, when she would hold nearly as high a position in English society as she did now in colonial society.

One morning, in the middle of March, the look-out at the mast-head of the *Ilione* hailed the deck,

and announced that the conical hill behind the city of Zibar was in sight, two points away on the starboard bow; and before long it could be seen by the officer of the watch on the bridge. Next the lighthouse on the island was sighted. Bompas was busy taking cross-bearings to determine the ship's exact position on the chart. The leadsmen in the chains reported that the water was gradually shoaling. The monotonous chant of 'By the mark ten' was quickly followed by 'By the deep nine.' The engines were stopped, and the *Ilione* hoisted a signal for a pilot to take her up to her anchorage in the sound. Quarantine officers came on board, the Governor was saluted, and before noon she was moored opposite the town, looking as if she had been there for weeks.

In the afternoon Vivian and Graves went on shore to call on Sir Henry Henderson, who received them with that urbane suavity for which he was celebrated. Irenè was not at home. Till his arrival that morning Vivian had not known that the Hendersons were at Zibar. They met two days afterwards; her carriage was passing the landing-stage as he came ashore. She stopped immediately, and said,

'Fancy our meeting again in this part of the world! Are you going to see Sir Henry? If so, I can take you; I am going home now.'

Vivian hesitated a little, remembering all the wise resolutions he had been making for the last forty-eight hours to see Irenè as little as possible; but she went on,

'You *must* come; you know I am supreme here, and I order you! Besides, my father was only saying at luncheon to-day that he wanted to see you, about that Arab business, I suppose.'

The wise resolutions were broken on the spot, after weak man's customary manner, and Vivian once more found himself by Irenè's side. Sir Henry was out, so she did the honours of Government House.

'Our garden is what we are most proud of out here. Come and see it.'

Leading the way down a flight of marble steps, she brought him to a paradise of flowers that are only seen in the tropics.

'I hope you have got plenty of news for us. We don't often meet a recent arrival from the civilised world.'

'And what do you call the civilised world? If I can judge from this garden and your boudoir, I should call this the very centre of it.'

'O, that is what I call portable civilisation; one can have that almost anywhere one goes to, and therefore I suppose we don't appreciate it enough. It is so pleasant to have some fresh people to talk to, instead of these sun-dried subjects of mine.'

'Are you very despotic to your subjects, Queen Irenè?'

'Yes, very, when they bore me, as they generally do. It is too hot to stay out here. Come in, and I will give you some tea—or some brandy-and-soda, if you like that better. Papa will be in soon. There, if you sit in that window you can see your *Ilione*. How I should like to have been a sailor, and to have captured a Cossack, as you did!'

'Don't remind me of my boyish extravagances, please. I think you would soon get tired of a sailor's life.'

'Why, have you got tired of the life?'

'No, I have not; but then most men do after fifteen years at sea. There is Graves, for instance, my

first lieutenant; there is not a better officer in the service; but he is always abusing it.'

'And yet you once thought of leaving it—at least, so I was told.'

'That was in those pleasant days at Ryde, before you—'

He stopped suddenly, and after a moment's silence went on:

'Have you forgotten those pleasant days there?'

Irenè answered by another question. 'Do not you think that it is much better to try and forget all pleasant days that are past and gone, for then we are not so likely to be discontented with the present? What nonsense I am talking! Really this climate is not suited for philosophical discussion. There is a *levée* here to-morrow; of course you will come to it?'

'I shall be most happy.'

'And I want you to give me the names of all your officers. Now that you are here, I will make Sir Henry give some dinner-parties; and you can bring some of them to-morrow.'

Here Sir Henry came in, and Kenrick Stuart, much to Vivian's astonishment, as Irenè had not mentioned his name, and he had no idea that he was in Zibar. Somehow Irenè seemed uneasy, and Vivian went away with a host of bewildering thoughts in his mind.

The *Ilione* had been sent to Zibar because a piratical attack had been made on a small vessel flying the British flag about a hundred miles down the coast by an Arab dhow. The creeks and inlets which indented the shore gave the Arabs many opportunities of concealing themselves and pouncing out suddenly upon any defenceless ship that passed. They were traders when they could, and pirates when they dared. Either character could be assumed or abandoned at a moment's notice.

A man-of-war appeared, and the dhow was only carrying a cargo of palm-oil on behalf of the white merchants of Bombay. If a short-handed schooner was seen next day on the horizon, every man on board the dhow was soon armed to the teeth, and the palm-oil was used to lubricate the locks of their muskets. It was not supposed that there was more than one dhow that had actually committed piracy, which had been almost unknown for years; but unless it was quickly put a stop to, her example might prove contagious. The *Ilione* went away for a week's cruise along the coast. She found two or three dhows in a creek, which were destroyed, as arms were found on board, and the Arabs were not able to give a satisfactory account of themselves; and another was captured by the *Ilione's* boats. The owner declared that the dhow which had attacked the vessel two months before had escaped to the north, by the help of the Prophet, and the *Ilione* returned from her mission of protecting the weak against the strong.

'Who is on the Government House roster to-morrow night?' said Graves one evening at the smoking-tub.

'Andrewes and I,' said Bompas, whom Irenè's smiles had helped to forget his loss in the matter of the Persian Gulf.

'Bompas, I think Henderson must have designs upon you. You're always there! How glad you must be that we weren't sent to the Persian Gulf! And I wonder what the Yankee at Colombo who seemed so fond of you would say to it—I mean Miss Venus Croggs?'

While the *Ilione* was in harbour invitations came regularly twice a week to two officers to dine at Government House, and always in the order of their rank; so that

the Government House roster became quite a joke on board.

'I'm sure I'm not there more than you are. Besides, Miss Henderson is disposed of. They say she is engaged to that fellow Stuart who dined with us the other day.'

'Try and cut him out, then, Bompas. But seriously, I wonder whether Vivian knows it?'

'I don't think he does. Now he, if you like, Graves, *is* always up there.'

'I think something is up,' said Andrewes meditatively.

'O Andrewes, what a detective was lost when you entered the service! How improving it is to see a master mind drawing conclusions!' answered to him his tormentor Hutton, laughing.

'And yet,' said Graves, 'I don't think I have ever once seen her and Stuart together, while Vivian is a sort of naval aide-de-camp to her. The other day she made him send the pinnace with a drift-net to the back of the island to catch fish for her aquarium, and she is always ordering him about. I believe that she keeps Stuart rather in the background; but that nevertheless he is meant after all to win the Henderson Plate.'

'Well, women *are* cautions,' declared Andrewes.

'Bravo, Andrewes!' said Hutton; 'you will be a wise man some day if you practise two or three hours regularly every day.'

It was determined to ask Vivian's permission to give a dance on board the *Ilione* to Irenè Henderson and whatever there was of beauty and fashion in Zibar.

II.

WORK.

'I don't think I ever before enjoyed anything so much as your ball the other day,' Irenè said to

Vivian one afternoon. 'You sailors always manage everything so well. The decorations were perfect.'

'I only wish we had as many opportunities of giving balls as our brethren in the army.'

'I hate military balls. Half the men look as if they were in danger of being bored to death, and as if they were conferring the greatest favour possible when they ask you to dance; whereas with sailors it is just the other way—they dance as if it was a pleasure that could only come once in a lifetime.'

On the night of the dance, when Sir Henry and Irenè reached the landing-stage they found a line of seamen in full dress drawn up on each side of the flight of steps. At the bottom was Vivian, waiting to conduct them to the place of honour in the stern of the barge. A dozen strokes of the oar brought them to the *Ilione*, and when they stepped upon the deck a guard of honour of marines received them with presented arms. Sir Henry and the French Consul's ugly wife, and Vivian and Irenè, opened the ball. Irenè had been doubtful whether she would be received with sufficient ceremony; but Vivian showed that he knew what was due to her, and the semi-royal honours that had been given to her (and to her father also, she added to herself in her thoughts—in a parenthesis) were like incense to her soul. Never had she looked more lovely. The indifferent looks of the wives and daughters of Zibar served to throw her beauty into stronger relief. And if only she could have had an escort of Light Cavalry to ride beside her carriage between Government House and the landing-stage the cup of her happiness would have overflowed. But, alas, there was no Light Cavalry nearer than Poonah.

'The *Ilione* has been like an oasis in the desert to us; I hope you will not have to leave us soon,' Irenè went on to say.

'I have orders to join the flag at Bombay in six weeks.'

'And then we shall have to settle down into the old groove of dulness again.'

'We are going for a week's cruise to the north along the coast in a few days. I wonder whether you and Sir Henry would be our guests and come with us? Your subjects will take great care of you, Queen Irenè.'

'O, that would be too delightful! How I should enjoy it! I was going to ask you to take us for a sail some afternoon, but this will be ever so much better. You must wait till papa comes in. I am almost sure he will say yes. He hasn't been very well lately, so a little sea air will do him good. I hope we sha'n't meet any of those dreadful Arab dhows. I was beginning to feel dull again, now that that delightful ball is over, but you have quite cheered me up.' Here Sir Henry came in, and Irenè rushed up to him, exclaiming, 'O papa, Captain Vivian wants us to go with him in the *Ilione* for a short cruise; do say yes. I shall enjoy it so much.'

'I have not a moment to spare, my dear; I have got to attend a council immediately; but if Captain Vivian will stay and dine with us, we will talk over his kind offer then. I only came in to get a book.'

'But you will say yes?'

'Well, I will think about it,' said Sir Henry, rushing out of the room.

'It is all right, I think; papa never gives a decisive answer, but I am sure he likes the idea. Now tell me all about it.'

'Well, I will put myself and the ship under your orders. You

shall take your piano on board if you like; there is room for it in my cabin, which you will have. I will send a boat for it to-morrow. And then you can give us some music in the evening; Hutton will be charmed to have somebody to accompany his violin. And whenever you want to go on shore or for a sail when we are at anchor, all the ship's boats and steam launches shall be at your disposal. An officer shall be told off every day to attend to your wants, and we will do everything we can think of to do honour to the Queen of Zibar!'

'What a tempting picture! How dreadful it will be if, after all, Sir Henry cannot go! We must do all we can at dinner to-night to persuade him.'

But Sir Henry required no persuading, and was glad to get a little rest from the toil of ruling in the tropics which Vivian's offer would give him. So Irenè, the child of excitement, was happy again.

A week afterwards the *Ilione* left Zibar with Sir Henry Henderson and Irenè on board. As she steamed out to sea, Irenè stood on the bridge with Vivian and the officer of the watch, and persuaded them to let her work the engine-room telegraph under their direction. Then noon came, and she wanted to be shown how to take meridian altitudes on the sextant. Gunnery was the next whim of this wilful beauty; so she made Vivian have one of the guns loaded with shot, and fired it herself. The *Ilione* was rolling at the time, and as she pulled the lanyard when the ship's side was depressed, the shot struck the water only a few yards off and raised an enormous column of spray; which, as Irenè had chosen to fire one of the weather guns, the wind blew back on to the deck, deluging her and everybody.

She sang to them in the evening; and what with her piano, Hutton's fiddle, and Bompas's flute, there was quite an orchestra on board. Sir Henry, too, enjoyed himself thoroughly, and seemed relieved at being away from official life, deputations, and his private secretary. It was quite a novelty to him to be cool at eleven o'clock in the morning, and to be sitting at that time in an easy-chair under an awning smoking a cigar, with a pleasant sea-breeze instead of a punkah.

Scene—the deck of the *Ilione*.
Time—evening, with the moon shining brightly; just when men always make such fools of themselves. *Dramatis personæ*—Vivian, a sea-captain; Irenè, daughter to the Governor of Zibar.

'Irenè, you will not send me away from you again? I never thought when I left Ryde that I should see you again so soon. One kind word from you now would make me forget the pain which your unkind words then gave me.'

'I am sorry if I said anything unkind to you. But it cannot make any difference now. Do you not know,' she went on rather nervously, 'that I am going to marry Mr. Stuart? O Harry, Harry, I have behaved most wickedly to you, I have deceived you in everything, and have given you false hopes that can never be fulfilled. But, Harry, I could not be a poor man's wife. I cannot do without riches and what they can buy. I should have made you miserable. I am worldly and selfish. But yet—believe it if you can—I had some thought for you. I pictured you to myself as my husband, loving me with all your heart, trying to make me happy, as I know you would have done. And in return I should have given

you nothing. I did not love you; I only liked you very much. I should have been miserable, and you still more. I am not worthy of the love you would have wasted on me, and the care you would have bestowed on me. I am all that my enemies say of me—cold, heartless, and mercenary. But I shrank from giving a base return for your devotion, such as I feel sure I should have given if I had consented to marry you. Your grief then would have been far greater than it is now. Your idol would soon have been cast down from its pedestal. Yes, Harry, I am sure it would. I can look upon these things more calmly than you can just now. And when you came out here, it was so pleasant after my monotonous life to see old friends from home again. Have you never felt the irksomeness of life, when each day is exactly like those which went before it and those which come after it? I thought, of course, you would hear that I was going to marry Kendrick Stuart, so I said nothing to you myself about it. I was a coward and feared to tell you lest it might end our pleasant friendship. I did very wrong, and tried to shelter myself by saying that of course you knew it all the time. I cannot ask you to forgive me; I will only ask you not to hate me, as I deserve to be hated.'

'I tried to hate you once, Irenè, and to magnify in my own eyes everything that I could think of against you; I tried to judge you dispassionately, but I found that it was a horrible thing to try to do; it seemed like sacrilege to me. So I cannot hate you, Irenè, even after what you have told me. I never heard that you were engaged to Stuart. I will be loyal to you till the last, and of nothing that you have done will I complain. If you think that I have anything

to forgive, I will say I forgive you, Irenè.

Here Vivian was called away by Bompas, who told him that the ship's course ought to be altered soon to avoid a sandbank with only four fathoms of water over it.

Thus Irenè wrote the epitaph of Vivian's romance. If only boyhood, he thought, could come back again to him—reckless happy boyhood, whose life is without a care and whose sky without a cloud; free untrammelled boyhood, when we think about the beautiful things that are before us in the world, and wonder what they will be like, and how we shall be sure to find them all! Happy boy! he can see himself in after life, with everything attained that ambition suggested, and everything found that he was going to seek! Who does not long to be able to hope all his boyish hopes again?

Next day Irenè and Sir Henry went out in the steam pinnace for a cruise along the coast, while the *Ilione* was taking soundings at the mouth of a river which entered the sea sixty miles north of Zibar. Hutton took charge of their boat. They started early in the morning, and went ashore for a few hours in the middle of the day to get shelter from the heat in the woods, that came down almost to the water's edge. As the afternoon drew on they embarked again; and when Irenè was tired of playing with the bright flowers she had picked, Hutton had to explain to her the principle of the steam-engine.

Vivian and the *Ilione* finished the survey of the river's mouth soon after midday; and then he took the launch and steamed along the coast to join the other boat, which he found in a creek about ten miles away. A sudden fancy, for which he could not account, had made him follow Irenè. In little more

than an hour the sun would set, it was necessary for the boats return, that they might reach *Ilione* before the end of the short twilight of the tropics. A pleasant breeze had sprung up off the land late in the afternoon, and a light swell was coming in from the south; but the crests of the waves were so far apart as to render hardly perceptible. Vivian led the way, Irenè's boat being about a hundred yards astern. The creek was a mile long. The entrance it could not be seen from the other end, as the mouth curved round to the south. They reached the open sea, and there, just in front of them, like a cat waiting for a mouse, was the piratical dhow which everybody thought had been destroyed or wrecked. Vivian recognised her at once by her name, which had been described to him. She changed her course to cut off the boats, and there could be no doubt of her hostility, as men could be seen on deck hurrying about with swords and muskets. Vivian's only thought was for Irenè's safety. Escape for the boats was impossible, unless the dhow was disabled, as she held a passage between a headland and a point through which they must pass to reach the open sea. Vivian looked through his glass that she was steered by a tiller, but by a person hanging over the stern. If the dhow could be cut she would become unmanageable, and unable for some time at least to pursue the boats, the crews of which were not numerous enough to attack her with any chance of success. The *Ilione* was out of sight, ten miles away. Vivian thought for a moment or two, and, calling Hutton to him up alongside, gave him a note which he had written a few minutes to Graves while the boats were together. He had determined to go alone and try to cut the dhow.

rudder pendants, so that if he failed Hutton might have as many men as possible to resist attack. If he lost one boat's crew in trying to disable the dhow, the other with Irène and Sir Henry in it would fall an easy prey to her. And as Irène was present, the other boat could not be used against her, except at the risk of Irène's life. He ordered all the men out of his boat. Hutton tried to remonstrate, and asked to be allowed to go with him, but he sternly ordered him to make the best of his way back to the *Ilione*. Vivian believed that he would be able alone to disable the dhow, and that it would only cost one life to do it. All he wished was not to be killed before he had cut the dhow's rudder pendants. So he steamed away, one hand on the tiller and the other on the reversing lever of the engine. A Frenchman would have embraced his messmates and taken a melodramatic farewell; but Vivian went away with the unostentatious heroism of one who was only doing his duty. His last words to Hutton were, 'Keep my boat between you and the dhow until I get up with her, then go straight away to the ship; and, whatever happens, don't turn back.'

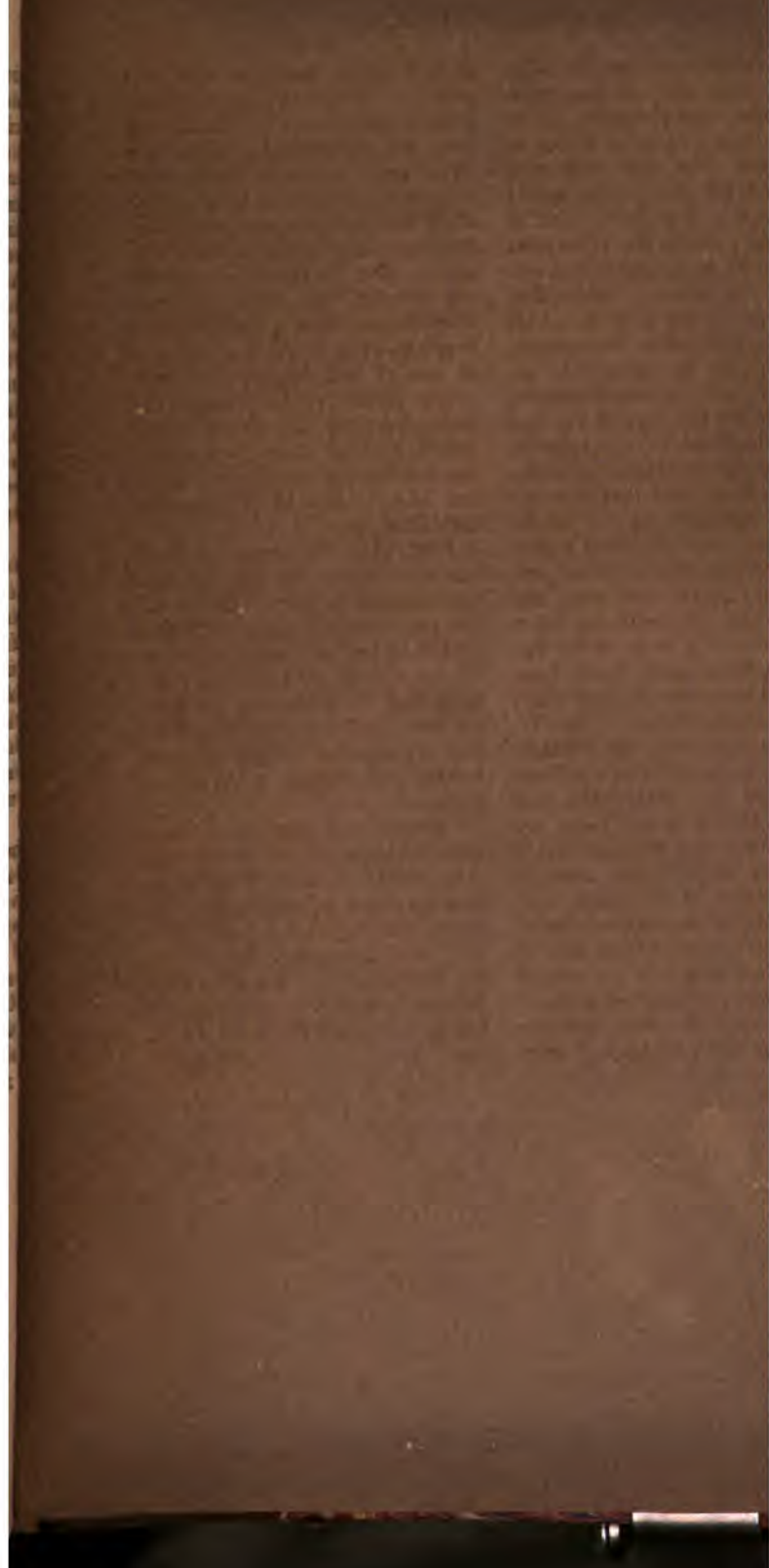
Then he sheered off and steered for the dhow, and soon the nose of his boat was touching her counter. Standing up in the stern with one foot on the tiller, he hacked away

at the rudder pendants with his sword. He had cut one of them, when a musket-ball hit him in the arm, but fortunately not in the sword-arm; one more stroke, and the other pendant was severed, the dhow went up into the wind, and became unmanageable. Irène was saved. But his sword had hardly cut through the strands of the rope when a bullet pierced Vivian's heart, and his troubled spirit was at rest at last, beyond the reach of this pitiless world. Irène, the enchantress of the shore, could wound him no more; her magic had lost its spell over him for ever. See how quietly he sleeps after life's fitful fever!

Even when the image of death was close before his eyes he had not forgotten his duty to the *Ilione*. The paper which he gave to Hutton contained his last instructions to Graves, to be obeyed when the hand that wrote them could write no more; and they showed as little fear of danger as if they had been written just before a review at Spithead:

'Search the coast thoroughly with the boats, but don't take the ship nearer in shore than seven fathoms; then go and report yourself to the flag at Bombay. You will find the gunnery returns in my despatch-box. Take the Hendersons back to Zibar immediately, before going after dhow. Good-bye!'

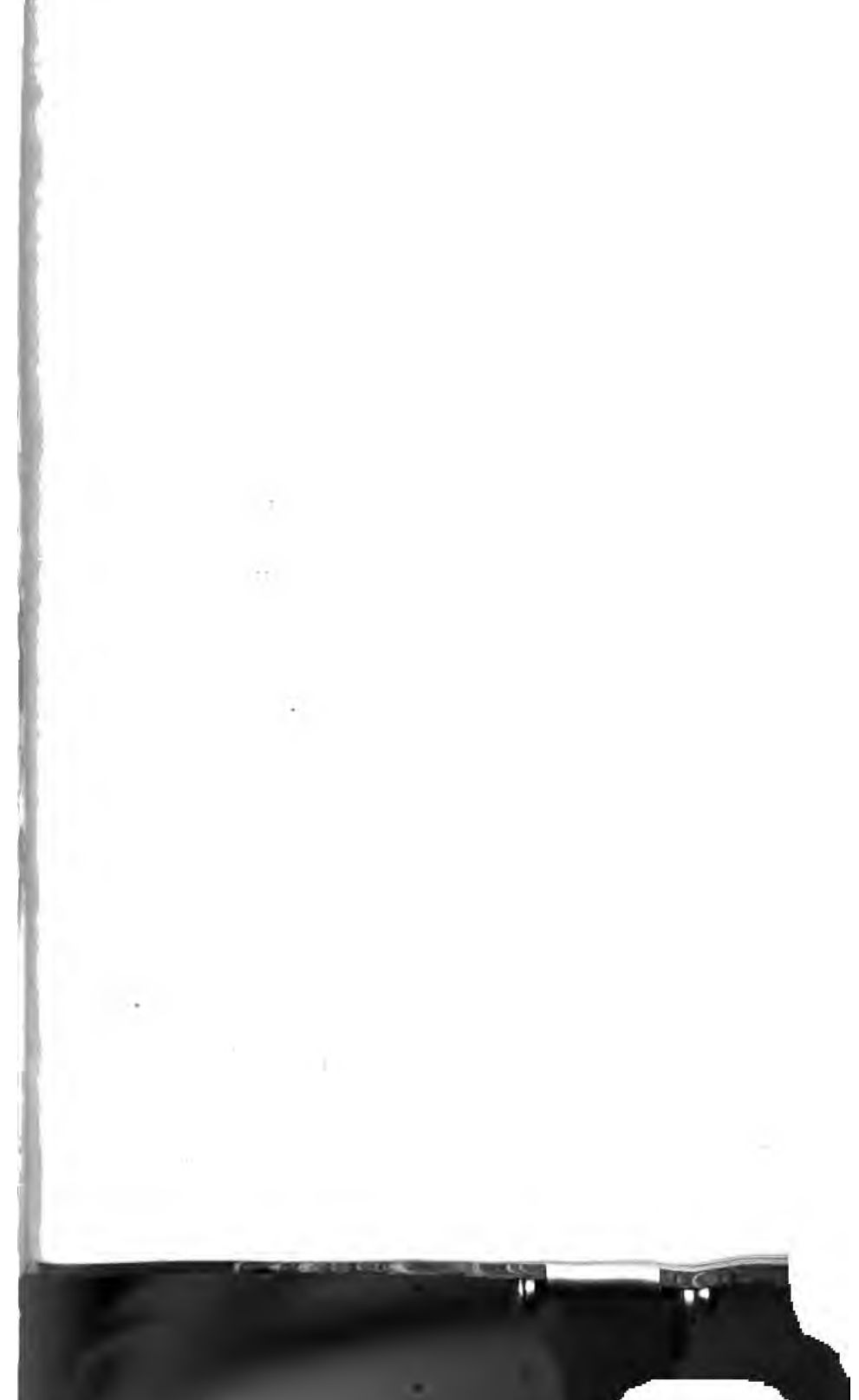
VOLKYRIUR.





H. M. Cutts 66

FRAGRANT BLOOM.



FRAGRANT BLOOM.

A Rose Song.

I.

O roses red and white, that glow
In summer glory at her door,
Fade, fall, and die, that winter snow
May speed the spring-time home once more !
For though her banishment severe
Sends me, an exile, from her side,
The golden love-tide of the year
Shall bring me back to claim a bride.
When the spring comes in again, sweetheart,
With the may on grove and glen,
We will keep our love-tide then, sweetheart,
When the spring comes in again !

• II.

O roses white and red, that shine
Stars in the nimbus of her hair,
Tell her that all your thorns are mine,
Her tokens in my heart to wear !
O, tell her, since she bids me go,
Love-loyalty must needs obey ;
But tell her, too, that well I know
Her soul would fain have bid me stay !
When the spring comes in again, sweetheart,
With the may on grove and glen,
We will keep our love-tide then, sweetheart,
When the spring comes in again !

III.

O roses red and white, that climb
About the windows of her room,
Breathe her the burden of my rhyme
In silent speech of fragrant bloom !
Waft it upon the wings of night,
Wed to the music of a kiss,
Hushed in a whisper of delight,
Low on the night-wind murmur this :
When the spring comes in again, sweetheart,
With the may on grove and glen,
We will keep our love-tide then, sweetheart,
When the spring comes in again, sweetheart,—
When the spring comes in again !

H. C. S.

HOW THEY GOT RID OF HIM.

A Story for Landlords and Tenants.

O, WHAT mean, miserable, shuffling cowards there are in this world, to be sure! cowards who will take advantage of those who are weak, and play with them to their hearts' content, simply because there is no likelihood of their being punished as they deserve. And, of all cowards, the man who takes a house and knocks it about and neglects to pay his rent because his superior landlord is not a *landlord* at all, but a *landlady*, an inexperienced woman who is quite at his mercy, that man is as big a coward as any.

Four years ago Mr. Cassing died. He left behind him a wife and an only daughter, whose sole property was a house to live in and the sum of one thousand pounds.

Now the question was how to make this thousand pounds yield sufficient for them to live upon.

Said Mr. Cassing's trustee, 'You must invest it in house-property.' He should have said, 'Shun house-property as you would poison, unless you are a shrewd sharp woman of the world.'

But he didn't; so she took his advice, and bought a house for at least a hundred pounds more than it was worth.

I need not weary my readers with reciting how the house was advertised; and how a suave gentlemanly being, who introduced himself as a brewer's collector and agent, offered himself as a tenant. Suffice it that the house was let to him, and that he furnished it at once for the reception of his family,

though whether the furniture was paid for is a matter of considerable doubt.

For several months he occupied the place, and they could not get a farthing of rent from him; and when at last they *did* get a 'half-quarter,' it was because they had employed an estate-agent, who threatened to take out a distress-warrant if he didn't pay it.

But it was evident he had no intention of paying any rent if he could help it. Indeed, at the end of the year, he had the impudence to say he would go out if they gave him thirty pounds to do so!

Of course, they wouldn't accede to his villanous demand; but it was certain they must get him out of the house somehow or other, for he was ruining the place so much that it would want thoroughly repairing before they could let it again.

But how to get him out—that was the question.

He used every precaution to prevent their getting *in*; the chain was never taken off the front door, and his family never seemed to leave the house, quitting it only by stealth under cover of the darkness. Thus the place was guarded night and day, and thus it was certain strategy would have to be employed in order to accomplish the desired ejection.

Many ways were proposed and rejected; but at length the agent's artful clerk, who was unknown to the tenant, said he would undertake to get rid of him if they would repose full power in him.

Having no particular objection to offer, they agreed to this; so he resolved to set about the business at once.

One day he called at a public-house, not half a mile from the house which the man was unlawfully holding.

He was closeted for some time with the landlord, to whom he related all the facts of the case as far as was necessary, explaining the difficulties of the situation.

'Now,' said he, when he had finished the recital, 'I want you to give me a message to this scoundrel to the effect that you wish to see him at once respecting an order; he is, you know, a brewer's agent. If you will keep him in conversation here for about twenty minutes, I can go and carry out the ejection.'

'Very well, sir,' said the landlord; 'I'll do my best to help you.'

'Thanks,' said the clerk; 'and any drink you choose to give him I will pay for. Give him as much as you like, so long as it keeps him here.'

Before the clerk started, the landlord suggested it would, perhaps, be wiser for him to don the potman's apron, as his gentlemanly appearance might make the tenant suspicious.

This was good advice, and the clerk acted upon it, making himself look as rough as possible.

When he reached the house he went up to the front door and vigorously plied the knocker. The door was presently opened as far as the chain would permit, and a woman's head appeared in the opening, inquiring what he wanted.

'Will you please tell Mr. Dixon Mr. Black, of the Swan, would like to see him for a few moments? Mr. Black has an order for him. Ask him to come at once, please,' said the clerk; and with that he

vanished—but not farther round the corner.

There he waited, watching patiently; and presently he the satisfaction of seeing the ant go forth.

After waiting a few moments make sure of his not returning, walked leisurely round behind block of buildings, and came at the other end of the street. Then, dashing along at the top of his speed, he rushed up to house like mad, and knocked loudly at the door.

When the woman appeared with the same precaution of locking the chain fastened—he cried

'For Heaven's sake, make haste! something has happened to Mr. Dixon!'

And so something had happened—he had been decoyed out of house!

With a white scared face woman hurried away and threw her shawl over her head, uttering a word except,

'My children! my poor, children!'

Passionately kissing the babes, who stood looking with vacant wonder, she ran into the streets, full of anxious concern for a scoundrel who was not worthy of it.

The clerk was touched but had not thought of this; but when he went to turn the little children out, his conscience nearly failed him. He could not do it; but calling to mind his mother and daughter whose fortune was comprised in the man he summoned up his resolution and tenderly led them into the garden. There he left them, wrapped up in warm clothes, while he ran back into the house, armed with his warrants of ejection, and shut himself secure.

Barely had he done it, when he heard a tremendous kickin

door, and a loud voice calling for admittance. Opening the bedroom window he looked out and saw the ejected tenant below. Directly the baffled scoundrel caught sight of him, he cursed him with all the strength of his tongue, and demanded to be let in.

Of course the clerk refused, and thereupon the enraged man recommenced to kick the door.

Now our clerk remembered seeing a bowl of unbaked batter in the kitchen, and, feeling a strong desire to punish the mean wretch below and to make him desist his kicking, he fetched it up.

Opening the window again he poured the contents over the scoundrel's wrathful head, smothering him with batter from top to toe.

The woman, who was vainly endeavouring to draw the man away, cried, in a tearful trembling voice, 'Come away, George! Do come away!'

Inflamed with drink and mad with rage, the coward, unable to vent his spite on the clerk, turned on the woman and struck her a savage blow in the face, cursing her for having let the clerk into the house.

'You dastard!' cried the clerk, while his blood boiled with indig-

nation; and, scrambling down the portico, he would have struck the cur, but a constable, who had been attracted by the noise, said,

'Don't take the law in yer own hands; leave 'im to me. We'll keep 'im in a safe place for a day or two, at any rate. Prosecute!' added he contemptuously. 'Depend on't *she* won't; she'll shield 'im all she can.'

And thus it proved. She wouldn't even charge him, and so he got off; but as to what became of him eventually it is more than I can say. I only know that Mrs. Cassing and her daughter got their house back, and that they were extremely delighted thereat.

But why, says the reader, should the clerk have taken so much trouble about their affairs? They couldn't have been of much moment to him.

Ah, well, perhaps not! I only know that Miss Cassing was a very pretty young lady, and that the estate-agent's clerk was a rather good-looking young bachelor; and that the thought had several times occurred to him that it would be better for them if Mrs. Cassing had somebody—say a son-in-law—who understood such things to look after their house.

F. J. C.

A HOLIDAY BY THE BAY OF BISCAY :

ARCACHON—BIARRITZ—CAMBO.

Even if people lived in a paradise, they would still like to get away from it now and then ; witness *Rasselas* in his Happy Valley. But the United Kingdom, though pleasant enough (when you are in easy circumstances of mind, body, and purse), is nevertheless not so completely a Garden of Eden as to make a temporary absence absolutely unbearable. When summer at home is cooling down and clouding over fast, many folks may be glad to enjoy warmth and sunshine for a few weeks longer before finally shutting themselves up to hibernate comfortably with close-drawn curtains and blazing fires.

For such, few pleasanter, less fatiguing, less expensive, and more effectual schemes can be devised than a visit to the south-west coast of France, beginning about the middle of September. This is quite different in every respect from the plan of wintering in the south of France or on the Riviera, between Nice and Genoa ; for you go to the Atlantic instead of to the Mediterranean shore, and that merely for a holiday, not with any view of making a lengthened sojourn. You also contemplate the Bay of Biscay entirely from a landsman's point of view, unless you take a bath or a sail in or on the fickle waves of the *Golfe de Gascogne*.

Your destination, too, is easily reached. You breakfast early one morning in London, sleep in Paris, and dine the next evening in Bordeaux, which pleasant city—a true *pays de cocagne*, a land of milk

and honey and wine—corresponds to London, in being your southern halt, starting-point, base of operations, and place of rendezvous. To do this, you leave Paris, Gare d'Orleans, by the morning 8.45 express, which reaches Bordeaux at 5.55. Notwithstanding that it carries first-class passengers only, an inspection of the time-tables will show that it is the cheapest. For although the express train cuts off one or two corners—as at Orleans and Tours—the distance from Paris to Bordeaux is considerable (585 kilometres=nearly 364 English miles) ; and the trains carrying second and third class passengers are so long about it (the most expeditious, train 89, direct, being from 9.30 in the morning till 10.30 at night), that, to avoid the fatigue which makes a toil of a pleasure, one must cut the journey into at least two stages, involving the expense of bed and some sort of supper, breakfast, and dinner (besides the loss of time), and thereby neutralising the economy of travelling second or third class. On this line, moreover, if the shares are firm the carriages tremble terribly, hindering all modes of passing the time except by conversing or looking out of window. Reading in them is next to impossible, and writing a little worse than impossible. Your attention at each station is mainly attracted by the howls of sporting and other dogs protesting against their confinement in cages, and renewing at every stoppage their plaintive prayers to be let out. If one wishes to see a town

or two of central France, the slow stage mode of progress may be adopted with advantage, provided that the traveller's leisure be not too limited. It is for him to consider the question of time as well as the object for which his excursion is made.

The trip now proposed is varied, comprehensive, complete in itself, forming a compact whole, well rounded off. Within its limits the tourist may content himself with satisfying considerable curiosity, and leaving other neighbouring sites and sights to be seen at a more convenient occasion. It includes plain, mountain, sea, forest, desert, regions rich in fruits and luxuries, vast solitudes, populous cities and pleasure-resorts, sanitariums for the sick and sporting-grounds for the strong, inland lagunes of fresh water and salt, and the shores of the Bay of Biscay, O. What more could be wished for in a single holiday? It comprises Arcachon, Biarritz, and Cambo (the A B C of south-west French watering-places), which are as unlike each other as is possible to conceive of spots in such close vicinity. A is relaxing, B bracing; A the (not too) cheaper, B the dearer. A (besides the stationary invalids) fills by the day with business people from Bordeaux; B is taken by the week or month by aristocrats, diplomatists, and functionaries from Paris and other continental capitals. A and B are maritime and lively; C is inland and dull: A and B made rapid growth, and are growing still; C never did grow, and never may. A is of sand, sandy, with perfumed pine-woods; B is perched on naked unshaded rocky ground; with verdure clad, C appears delightful to the ravished sight. A and B lie in your way, C is completely out of the way.

I will not detain you at Bor-

deaux, however agreeable you may find its aspect. But a day's rest can be pleasantly occupied by a peep at the markets, where, besides unaccustomed and luscious fruits and tunny (admitted into Yarrell's *British Fishes*, but seldom seen in London), you will behold poor little dicky-birds ready plucked and spitted together by dozens for roasting, amongst which you are just as likely as not to find swallows, wagtails, and robin red-breasts. A Small Birds Protection Act is sadly wanted in the south of France. One gentleman excused himself for killing a nightingale in his garden, because that was the only place he had to shoot in. More satisfactory to contemplate than the slaughtered songsters are the headdresses (whether costume cap or folded kerchief), and the faces under them, of the Bordeaux market-women—dark-eyed, shrill-tongued, loud-voiced, voluble, yet obliging beauties, who, when on the move, carry their baskets on their heads so adroitly as not to hinder knitting nor even newspaper-reading. It would not be a bad calisthenic exercise if English young ladies were taught to do the same.

In a strange, and sometimes in a familiar, city, one of a tourist's duties is to lounge about the streets, which in Bordeaux are often narrow—instance the much-frequented Rue St. Catherine, and others—an advantage as well as a fault; shady in hot weather, and, although the footway is consequently limited, giving animation by compressing the crowd. Their pavement of stone blocks, rough, uneven, and noisy, has the compensating virtue of not being dusty. Broader thoroughfares are not streets, but *cours*—some being fossés, ditches, doubtless from filled-up fortifications. While strolling along the Chaussée Tourny,

you may as well stretch as far as the United Botanic and Public Garden, on whose seats you can repose, while admiring those sure climate tests, the luxuriant evergreen magnolias, also the neatly-trimmed carpet-beds, the handsome nursemaids, the lively children, and the well-dressed mammas. For this Public Garden eschews all shabbiness, and likes to be frequented by people in smart attire. For instance, in the afternoon it permits neither baskets nor parcels to be carried through it. It is conscious of no sin in being a Vanity Fair. Soberer trains of thought will be suggested by the Druidic cromlech transported from Lesparre (Department of the Gironde), once the assembly-hall of primitive tribes, whose decease is not recorded in any obituary. Noteworthy is the clump of *Chamærops excelsa*, a Chinese fibre-producing palm, planted in the open ground in 1873, and raised from seeds ripened in this same Botanic Garden. Another interesting object is the well-stocked basin of aquatic plants, in which the blue and pink lotuses of the East grow in company with our own native flowering rush. In the evening, should there be an attractive performance at the Grand Théâtre, you are strongly advised to witness it.

From Bordeaux, where will you like to go to first? It is not a bad plan to leave things that lie close at hand until the last, and to push on at once to the distant points of your programme. You can pick up the others on your way back. We will therefore take, at the St. Jean Station, at the southern extremity of Bordeaux, the express which, starting at eight in the morning, delivers you at Bayonne at 12.25. Please select one of the carriages at the head of the train, in which you will travel through without changing ;

for the same train has at its end carriages for Tarbes, the two Bag-nères, &c., which are detached at Morcenx. Of course, if in these, you must there get out.

Soon after leaving Bordeaux you skim over the Landes—the desert which I promised you. And yet, to the eye, it does not look more irreclaimable than tracts which have been rendered fertile in England. It is a vast weary plain, so nearly a dead level that water fallen on it does not know which way to flow. Surveyors, indeed, have made the discovery that there exists an inclination of one in a thousand in the direction of the coast. Where the horizon is not a straight line, like the sea, it is broken and bounded by widespread forests of maritime pines, which, being all of the same age and rising to the same height, carry out the prevailing uniformity. Those fir-woods are all but impenetrable from the undergrowth of heather, bracken, and other occupants of sterile ground; moreover, if you could get into them, it would be still less easy to find your way out again. The sand-hills raised by the winds along the coast impede all drainage; of which the consequences are pools, ponds, stagnant puddles, and fevers. The soil, sodden in winter, is baked to a hard crust in summer; the nature of whose surface is indicated by the few inhabitants taking their walks abroad on stilts (there called *chanques*, perhaps from the English ‘shanks’), which also hoist them out of the reach of wolf-bites. Villages are few and far between; houses are open to numerous improvements; dwellers therein live on black rye-bread, and get married exclusively on Tuesdays.

Those who can put up with such board and lodging, and who stake their happiness on fishing and

shooting, may find it there. The vast Etang de Cazau and other fresh-water meres afford the one; while for the other there is a rich assortment, from roebuck, wild swine, and fox, down to snipe and titmice, including the whole list of small birds of passage, which are so ruthlessly slaughtered hereabouts. By very good luck you may light upon a spoonbill or a swan, perhaps even on a bustard. But all these prizes are quite out of the reach (probably out of the thoughts and wishes) of the ordinary tourist. They are only to be got at by the temporary resident who will familiarise himself with the people, speak their language, and make himself as much at home as if he liked the place. Most folks will follow Dante's example in—you know where—will look, and pass on. So will we. Even after escaping from the Landes there is not much to attract attention, as often happens in railway journeys, which, in fact, are not real travelling, but merely the transport of an individual body from one spot on the map of Europe to another. Some healthy cork-trees (when they are not corked) will strike an English eye by their singular aspect; which also will remark with wonder the scarcity or the absence of vines about Bayonne; also that the Evening Primrose, after crossing the Atlantic, has become a weed along the line of rail.

Much to be recommended at Bayonne is the Hôtel du Commerce, E. Teinturier, proprietor and landlord—so good that it may advantageously influence your plans. One rule in life is, 'When you have got a good thing, keep it;' accordingly, when you light upon a good hotel, stick to it, and make it the centre of your excursions, instead of running the risk of an indifferent meal and a com-

fortless chamber elsewhere. Having therefore fixed your quarters at the Hôtel du Commerce, your first stroll through the streets of Bayonne will show you that the character of this corner of the south of France differs from that of the Mediterranean coast. It is less cosmopolite and more typical (in consequence of the admixture of Spanish and Pyrenean elements) in race, character, and costumes. Over nearly all the shops and hotels in Bayonne the inscriptions are in Spanish as well as in French.

To pass the time between your early arrival and dinner, a pleasant drive of two or three miles, after déjeuner-luncheon, takes you to the mouth of the Adour, the river on which Bayonne is built—that is, to its present mouth, which it has changed more than once, causing inundations, shipwrecks, derangement of trade, and playing other mischievous tricks. The public carriages here are cheap, and the drivers civil. After leaving the town, the road skirts the river, till it enters a pine-wood planted on sand-hills, on leaving which you soon reach the outlet of the mountain-born stream, to gaze on the blue expanse of the Gulf of Gascony. The entrance to the harbour is bad, in proof of which it is probable that not a vessel may be visible within the whole horizon of the bay, although, like other cholerick persons, the said bay has its placid moments, of which the hour of your visit may be one.

The shifting bar at the river's mouth is the plague of engineers. The still unfinished jetties show that as soon as a plan has been decided on, some change in the river's bed renders it useless. It is an annoying state of things for merchant vessels never to be sure when they can get in or out; which does not prevent your loitering on

the sandy beach, gathering true samphire, and inhaling sea-breezes with nothing to affect their purity between this and America. Looking northwards, there is not much to see; but to the south, Biarritz lies in the middle distance, with the shadowy chain of the Pyrenees for background. Ask your driver not to return by the same road as he came, when you will get charming glimpses of the town and the river from fir-clad heights, whose half-shade is redolent of tonic resinous odours. That balmy air, combined with the fatigues of the day, will induce an after-dinner drowsiness, which is not unpleasant as bed-time approaches. In which case weariness will make you forgive the fact—I forget whether it occurred at Bayonne—that from Bordeaux inclusive, southwards, the hotels seem given to economising pillows, supplying you with a plump bolster only whereon to rest your sleepy head. But in French railway travelling perhaps the most trying and depressing item of all is the waiting for the distribution of the luggage at a journey's end, unless either you have a courier or have no more luggage than you can carry away with you.

From Bayonne, two excursions are absolutely obligatory; and two excursions can hardly be more different. One is to Biarritz, on the coast, with its charming sea-view and its arid landscape; the other to Cambo, all vegetation and verdure, lying snug in a pretty Pyrenean valley, although much prettier are to be found elsewhere. But at Bayonne it is heresy to breathe a suspicion that Cambo is anything short of perfect. Dr. Constantin James (the same who narrowly escaped being murdered in a railway carriage a few years ago), in his useful *Guide Pratique aux Eaux Minérales et aux Bains*

de Mer, is very angry with Cambo because it is only pretty and pleasant. Going there to purchase chocolate is excusable, but for the sake of its waters, no, no, no! So slightly are they mineralised and so weakly tepid that he cannot conceive how a doctor can think of sending there any patient who is seriously ill. No more can I; for when one is seriously stricken one's own fireside and chamber suit the sufferer best. It is there that whatever waters may be prescribed are most easily swallowed and assimilated:

'Mid pleasures and palaces, when well, we
may roam;

If illness attacks us, there's no place like
home.

Home, home; sweet, sweet home!

For taking of physic, there's no place like
home!

But Cambo shall be reserved until to-morrow; to-day we will visit Biarritz, and that in an easy-going open carriage instead of by the dusty see-nothing railway. True, it is considerably more expensive; but we did not set out for the purpose of saving. Carriage-roads are now the luxury. So we start with a pair of brisk little Spanish horses, who trot merrily up hill as well as down dale. For the road from Bayonne to Biarritz undulates, swinging up and down, like the flight of the woodpecker. The impetus gained by your trap in descending one slope almost suffices to carry it half way up the next. At first it passes through an avenue of Lombardy poplars, which further on are replaced by plane-trees. On each side are chalets and villas, with gardens in which, favoured by the climate, vegetable mosaics and carpet-bedding run rampant riot and stare you out of countenance. Land to sell, inviting the country-boxes of the future to come and take their places on it, proves the increasing popularity of the place.

And so we soon reach Biarritz. Is not this drive, now, preferable to the railway?

Biarritz, you see, is simply a cluster of grandiose villas, hotels, and restaurants, perched on a cliff, apart from which the Villa Eugénie (now shut up) stands out, but once was the mistress and the leader. For its centre, the heart which gives impulse to its circulation, the town has a busy little spot full of hack carriages, diligences, Spanish pedlars, drivers in ancient postillion costume, and the rest of the sundry personalities who minister to the requirements of wealthy tourists. The cottages down below might elsewhere be mansions, true cottages of gentility. Nevertheless they are not above offering themselves for hire. But a portion of the rocky beach is also bordered by the humble retreats of ostentatious wealth and exclusive aristocracy. A half-moon amphitheatrical promenade (centred by a pavilioned musicians' stand) stretches between them and the ex-imperial residence, starting from a tawdry mauresque bathing establishment. Above all, on the top of the cliff, towers a Grand Hôtel, besides others less grand and perhaps a little less expensive. But the question of cost need not trouble you much, as a day at Biarritz will be enough, unless you go there for an autumn's stay, when you will take your measures accordingly. Biarritz, in fact, is good either for a day or for a month; any intermediate period is hardly worth thinking of.

Who some of the visitors are who contribute to Biarritz's prosperity, those who run or ride may read in such inscriptions as 'Old England' over a ready-made clothes shop and 'British International Bank.' For such and other residents Biarritz possesses a casino and—a skating rink. It certainly is

an original idea to resist warm weather by taking strong exercise. But *similia similibus curantur*. A hair of the dog that bit you is a certain remedy against his bite. Or rinking with 70° or 80° of Fahrenheit may perhaps have been devised as a penitential means of expiating watering-place peccadilloes. But if Russians enjoy rolling naked in snow, why should not other people be allowed to heat themselves in the dog-days? Why not, indeed? Does fashion pay any regard to climate?

Not being obliged to rink, we will descend the steps leading down to the beach through tufts of tamarisk (the seaside shrub which grows where nothing else will), passing the donkeys for hire clustered in a nook in the cliff, to the insulated rock, now left dry by the tide, with a path to its summit. Close by, live lobsters and crawfish to sell are associated with boats to let. Of all this you get a bird's-eye view from one of those public seats on an eminence which the town is not stingy in supplying to its guests. The site, being admirable, is thickly besprinkled with roomy villas perched aloft, commanding extensive sea-views, as well as peeps at the external shell of the quondam paradise, the Villa Eugénie. Within the town private speculation obviates any deficiency of photographs, fashions, articles de Paris, articles d'Espagne, *bric-à-brac*, and the hundred elegant inutilities which everybody likes to look at, and some few people to buy. Human vanity and, I will add, laudable good taste and self-respect supply a most satisfactory display of handsome equipages and charming toilettes.

As there is no railway to Cambo, you have the Hobson's choice of reaching it by road. The drive, without being sensational, is agreeably varied, permitting you to re-

mark the bay-trees in the hedges, proofs of the mild winter climate, with here and there a yucca or two. How the yuccas got there, whether by accident or design, is best known to themselves. The strange tastes of the inhabitants are betrayed by the festoons of piments or capsicums hung out everywhere to dry in the sun for winter use. During summer they are eaten fresh, in all their shades of colour, from green to scarlet. Other people besides Horace's reapers must possess the *dura ilia* (coarsely translated by Byron 'rigid guts'), of which he speaks as belonging to Roman countrymen. Fancy a little treat of bread, salt, and raw cayenne-pepper pods offered as a refreshing snack on a blazing August afternoon, after pimento soup for dinner and pimento salad for breakfast! Yet it must be a healthy diet, if the vigour of the natives can be accepted as a test. But O, what *dura ilia*!

We are near enough to the backbone of the Pyrenean range to notice the persistent use, as beasts of draught, of oxen, who follow instead of being driven by their driver. His only whip is a long blunt stick without spur or goad to quicken their pace, which is slow at the quickest. The labour thus obtained from horned cattle, although it saves the keep of a horse, is a great waste of time; and the cows assuredly must think it a hard lot to have to drag the plough at the same time that they are furnishing milk and calves. But it has always been so; and that, in these regions, is an unanswerable argument.

Along the road you catch pretty glimpses of the river (at times and places the torrent) Nive, which some tourists talk of descending in a boat from Cambo to Bayonne, and shooting the rapids which occur at certain points, in order to

get a nearer look at the one essential condition for the performance of the feat is, it should be water enough bed of the river, which it not at the close of last Summer being one evident consequence a long, rainless, cloudless Sunshine in these parts into account when people are doing their domestic arrangements. For instance, the prime object in laying out gardens and grounds is to obtain shade deciduous trees and shrubs insure comparative coolness summer long, and which, after, when the leaves are admitted the then welcome rays of sun.

Cambo consists of comfortable-looking houses, scattered with trees and gardens. These lie mostly in the shade of the village, while the well-constructed thermal bath is in the bottom of a valley below. It seemed, for so little frequented though it was, that it was rung for admission, not that there was there. When some one found up, after persisting, they asked my name because I had a bath. It is their custom, said, at Cambo. Probably they are unwilling that any day-traveller should come and be recognised.

The site of Cambo is wild enough to be romantic. The spots would have great attractions for the landscape painter. It is the very place to wish to try the psychology of complete retirement, or to undertake a course of novel-reading to writing a review. If you carry with you two or three books, you will find it to get through them undisturbed. Children may be taken to Cambo under

nothing but play and grow; adults may be sent to its quiet shades to reflect on past errors and future prospects. Behind the establishment there is a delightfully cool umbrageous walk by the river-side, along the foot of wooded hills, where you may collect ferns and autumn-blooming crocuses all day long. True, the Hôtel St. Martin, opposite the establishment, looks as if you could enjoy there the creature comforts and even the elegances of life; all which does not prevent Cambo's attaining the superlative of dulness and isolation.

St. Jean de Luz being on the direct line to Spain, you can take the rail if you like it best. By road, it makes a nice day's excursion from Bayonne, to which you can get back in time for dinner by jogging on at an easy pace. For even if the horses go gently along their road, they feel it a duty to themselves to put on extra steam when going out of or into town.

This line of coast is full of historical recollections, which I spare you. Note, however, that its sailors were the first in Europe to attack the whale, which then abounded in the Bay of Biscay, although subsequently driven northwards. The villages and habitations are anything but sparse, and no houses show symptoms that their owners are poor; only they are all too staring white, and their dark-green or chocolate-brown doors and shutters make them look in the glaring sunshine as if spotted with black. This excess of whitewash gives a paltry appearance to buildings that might otherwise put forth respectable pretensions. More real colour on their surface would tone them down into harmony with the surrounding landscape. If people would only subdue their lime a little by tinting it with some

hue befitting the woodwork and the roof, all would be well.

The gales that sweep in from the Bay of Biscay explain the steepleless churches and the absence of trees which you notice along the way. But what again most catches the traveller's eye are the omnipresent bunches of scarlet piments, whose general use lays the population open to the unjust charge of being 'fire-eaters,' which they certainly are not, in a moral sense. It must take a long apprenticeship to acquire a taste for capsicums eaten as an esculent vegetable and not as a condiment; for when those not used to them venture to taste them, they burn the palate, so that for hours it cannot distinguish sugar from salt. There is a large, irregularly-round, tomato-like sort called Spanish piments, which, stewed into a *ragoût*, however distasteful and even insupportable to strangers, is highly esteemed by the natives, because of the large quantity of inflammatory matter with which it enables them to fill their stomachs. The axiom *De gustibus* is not yet obsolete.

As soon as you enter the long narrow street, which forms a considerable portion of St. Jean de Luz, a stone informs you, with pardonable pride, that you are 824 kilomètres or 512 English miles from Paris. It says nothing about the distance from Bayonne or Bordeaux. On reaching the other extremity of the town, where there are open spaces and a pleasant little promenade shaded with trees, you have only to look around you to realise the fact. I say nothing of defective orthography, such as 'Saucisson de Lion' for Lyons sausage; but the flood of light and the very air are convincing proofs that you have made a long stride towards the south. And then you have the dark mountain-

chain stretching before you, apparently close at hand, although you are not yet in it nor even very near to it.

St. Jean de Luz has the look of a quiet little town, in which one might sojourn pleasantly for a while. The hotels promise well; the winter climate is mild; there are plenty of lodgings and villas to let, looking out on the magnificent well-sheltered little bay, where of course sea-bathing is to be had. But the main body of the town does not rush down to the beach as in so many other seaside places. The sea-front is anything but the best or the busiest. The level of the town itself looks not much, if at all, above high-water mark. In fact, it is protected by a stone digue or sea-wall from the inrolling waters of the Bay of Biscay, as if the soil had subsided or the waves encroached on it; for in front of the digue lie strewed on the beach ruins of abandoned and demolished houses and even of a well. Some of the houses are connected with the digue by wooden bridges, to afford them speedy access to the beach; for the upper stories only of the houses within the digue, and close to it, can get a view of the bay from their windows.

Do not fail to visit the church of St. Jean de Luz. On entering it, you involuntarily exclaim, 'What a splendid concert-room this would make if its acoustic properties are satisfactory!' Except at the end where stands the high altar it is completely surrounded by three solid galleries or balconies, one above the other. At the organ end there is a fourth gallery running quite beneath the ponderous instrument. These galleries are occupied solely by men, which appears to be a Spanish custom. Behind the benches where they sit are pegs to hang their hats and caps on. The area, enjoying the luxury of a boarded

floor made still more comfortable by squares of carpet, is exclusively appropriated to ladies. The high altar is backed by two rows of barbaric statues, glistening with burnished gold, reaching up to the roof, which is vaulted and as bright as colour can make it. A concert in fact was announced for that very afternoon. At vespers the organ was to be 'held' by a skilful organist from Pau, and in the evening an anthem was to be sung by *une belle voix* of undenoted origin. Collections to be made for the wants of the church.

While remaining hereabouts, the traveller can visit interesting spots in the Low Pyrenees, or, crossing the Spanish frontier, take a peep at Fuenterrabia, Irun, and St. Sebastian; but it does not enter into my present plan to accompany him thither. On the contrary, we will retrace our steps by the railway from Bayonne towards Bordeaux until, branching off at Lamothe, it carries us to Arcachon, now metamorphosed from an obscure village into quite a fashionable town, and which has been brought to its height of deserved popularity by the combined efforts of the Jew Péreire and the Christian Johnston, one of Israelite, the other of English, extraction; and I find among my notes a query whether the founders of a new and prosperous community do not deserve as well of their country as the discoverers of a new star in the heavens. The one, however, does not detract from the merit of the other. M. Péreire's command of money built the villas, casinos, and sundry attractions which have made Arcachon so agreeable a winter resort; M. Johnston (one of the great vine-growers of Bordeaux) developed its commercial welfare by raising up a little fleet of fishing-steamers, furnished with enormous nets, and by helping to

lay down its oyster-parks, whose produce is as pleasant as it is important. A city for once has been successfully built on sand.

The art of enjoying life, when confined to any given locality, consists, not in endeavours (which will often turn out vain) to change the peculiar characters of that locality, but rather to make the most of them—nay, even to augment them in the same direction, increasing the importance of that special native wealth or advantage, and so to turn what is indigenous to the soil and innate to the district to the very best possible account. Of course this does not mean that unhealthy marshes should not be drained, or that mountain defiles should not have roads made through them; but the marsh (witness Holland) may be converted into rich and never-failing pastures instead of into indifferent and precarious corn-land, and the line of road may be made to display picturesque features of scenery (example, the Holyhead and the Simplon roads) as well as to lead from one point to another. Thus, on land which is at present or has previously been marsh the wise amateur will excavate a rivulet or a lake, and will then plant his ornamental woods with willow, alder, and poplar trees, instead of attempting an arboretum of rock-loving conifers or shrubs that thrive best where heat and drought prevail. In short, the principle indicated is, to make the most of existing circumstances, and not to strive after circumstances which do not, and probably cannot, there exist. Nature may be coaxed and led, but she pertinaciously resists being forcibly driven.

Regarded in this light, Arcachon is admirable as a specimen of what may be done with unpromising materials; namely, a monotonous pine-forest covering a vast extent

of sandy wilderness, in an out-of-the-way, inconvenient, unfrequented corner leading to nowhere, skirting a large shallow salt-water basin, whose level varies with every tide. But the sands, the pine-woods, and the climate were there. They could not be got rid of, and must be made the best of. It was an effort of genius to combine and convert them into a whole, which looks more like the scenery of a brilliant ballet than like practical habitations for every-day use.

For a few days' stay, you may do worse than go to the Hôtel Legallais, so close to the 'Bassin' that you may eat peaches in your bedroom and throw the stones into the water; there is also the new Grand Hôtel, both bigger and dearer than the preceding. The winter residences for invalids or idlers at Arcachon form a separate suburb, called the Ville d'Hiver, consisting of separate villas, each having a garden or grounds of its own and also a name, selected quite *ad libitum*. For the Winter Town admits of nothing so commonplace as numbers to designate its respective houses; consequently the memories of postmen and hackney coachmen are kept in good training.

'Do you know the Villa Turgot?' I asked my driver.

'Perfectly, monsieur.'

'Très-bien. I want to go there.'

And straight we went, without hesitation, to a smart cottage or villa of the third or fourth magnitude, snugly embowered in a corner of the pine-wood.

There are chalets and villas to suit all purses, from modest independence to millionaires. The gardening of the villas is included in the rent, which may be called moderate in proportion to the furniture and accommodation given, considering too that they are rarely occupied more than a portion of

the year. The Ville d'Hiver is lighted with gas; notwithstanding which it has, after dark, an air of extreme retirement and isolation. The sandy paths give out no sound of wheels or footsteps. There is no voice of birds, no sighing of the wind amongst the branches. On a calm night, the silence amidst the fir-trees is so profound and oppressive that the hum of a nocturnal insect makes a welcome break. If a dog barks in the distance, it suggests the belief that a pack of wild hounds is hunting the wood; and when M. Péreire's peacocks wake up and scream, the listener is convinced that that Indian fowl has been naturalised in the covert which clothes the sand-hills.

'When you go to Arcachon,' said a lady-friend, 'do ask whether Dr. Hameau is still alive. He was so kind and attentive to us during my poor daughter's illness! He settled at Arcachon himself for the sake of the climate and the resinous emanations given out by the fir-woods. But he was in such delicate health that I fear he may be dead.'

On arriving, therefore, my first inquiries were in reference to the amiable and benevolent physician. The answer was that Monsieur le Docteur Hameau had long since been cured, enjoys excellent health, and is fully occupied with an extensive practice.

E. S. D.



ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. VIII.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Dulce—delightful, says the poet,
Est—is it, and right well we know it,
Desipere—to take our pleasure
In loco—when we have the leisure.
Then greet we here a short vacation
Serving for rest and recreation.

I.

A laureate courteously avows
The bays were greener from his brows.

II.

She wore a wreath of roses twined
With myrtle, and to bards was kind.

III.

The manor-house of ancient fame
To city mart still gives its name.

IV.

These three, though like to win the day,
Were killed by one who ran away.

V.

The less the schoolboys who translate him
Know of him oft the more they hate him.

VI.

It comes from ashes, so we read,
And is— What is it? What, indeed!

VII.

His reign, his very life, how brief:
A scene of strife cut short by grief!

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the October Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by September the 10th.







